

# **"Social Democrats-USA"**

*In the service of reaction*

*A record of racism,  
low wages, bureaucracy  
and betrayal of Socialism*

*George Morris*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

GEORGE MORRIS has covered the labor movement as a reporter, commentator and author of books and pamphlets for more than four decades. As editor of the *Western Worker* from 1932 through 1934, he was both reporter and participant in the West Coast farm struggles of that period and in the historic maritime strike and San Francisco General Strike of 1934. Starting as a reporter for the *Daily Worker* late in 1934, Morris was from 1935 to 1937 its Michigan correspondent and took an active part in the strikes of that period, climaxing with the famed sitdown at the General Motors plants in Flint.

For most of his 40 years with the *Daily Worker*, the *Worker* and the *Daily World*, Morris was labor editor and columnist. He was a familiar figure at labor conventions and other labor events. Morris holds the record as the longest sustained reporter and commentator on trade union affairs in the country. His column "World of Labor" appeared from 1944 to 1975. He has written close to forty pamphlets dealing with labor in the United States and abroad. Following trips to the Soviet Union and other socialist lands, he made studies of unions under socialism, which were summarized in his pamphlets *What I Saw in the Soviet Union*, 1959, and *The USSR Today: 50 Years of Socialism*, 1967. His first book, *American Labor: Which Way?* appeared in 1961. In 1967 he wrote *The CIA and American Labor*, which has been translated and published in a dozen countries. His most recent book, *Rebellion in the Unions: A Handbook for Rank and File Action*, was published in 1971 by New Outlook Publishers.

George Morris is now in Moscow where he is covering the Soviet scene for the *Daily World* and *People's World*.



## PREFACE

A century ago Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, observed tendencies in the working class movement which sought to divert it from revolutionary aims and limit it to a struggle for reforms of capitalism. Their warnings were increasingly confirmed as imperialism came to full bloom. A growing number of leaders in the world socialist movement abandoned the basic aims and direction of socialism and became just "reform socialists." Some of their theoreticians even asserted that imperialist expansion served to "advance" socialist objectives. They saw in imperialism a progressive force in the colonies and other subject lands.

These right-wing forces in the socialist movement, following their reformist precepts, became active collaborators with imperialism and its exploitation of subject peoples. They maintained that the imperialist era was necessary to "prepare" the people for "socialism." It need hardly be added that racism became a companion weapon for the subjugation of the vast majority of the world's non-white peoples.

This service to imperialism resulted in the great betrayal of 1914 when leaders of the German Social Democratic Party and many of the prominent leaders of the socialist and labor movements of France, Italy and Britain took the side of their respective imperialist powers in World War I—a war for redivision of colonial possessions and spheres of influence. It was Lenin who brought the struggle against this betrayal to a head. The climax was the October revolution and the founding in Russia of the first socialist republic in 1917. Ever since, revolutionary socialism and reformist social democracy of the class-collaborationist type, hardly distinguishable from the parties of capitalism, have been in sharp conflict. In the three generations since the great betrayal, a Communist movement has expanded to every corner of the globe. It became a powerful force among the peoples of developing lands in Asia, Africa and Latin America. True socialist society is now firmly established and is prospering in many lands. In many of the "third world" countries the trend is toward a socialist path of development, facilitated by the friendship and cooperation of the Soviet Union and the other socialist lands.

Social democracy is in crisis today. Where it has, or had, the reins of government, there is not a sign of socialism, but merely some reforms that refurbish capitalism, to make it more tolerable for the moment. There is no basic change. Those lands are plagued by the historic capitalist evils of mass unemployment, inflation, poverty, widespread hunger, racism, and the tendency for the rich to get richer and the poor poorer. This contrast to the progress and strength in the lands of victorious socialism has stirred new rebellious trends within the parties of the Socialist International (the Second International), especially among their youth and workers.

These tendencies show up in various forms and to varying degrees. In some Socialist parties there are organized pressures for a Marxist renewal and toward closer collaboration with the Communist parties. In some parties substantial minorities are challenging the old guard of social democracy and their hard-bitten anti-Sovietism.

The pressure for change is most visible in the trade union field, where the working class influence is greatest. Friendly relations and cooperative action on issues have developed on a wide scale between unions led by Communists, Social Democrats and Catholics. Since 1973 there have been some official contacts between the leaders of the three union internationals.

It is within such a world context that Social Democrats-USA is of special interest. This is the far right group of the U.S. socialists. It is not the object of this booklet to deal with social democracy in general. There is much literature available on that.

Our concern is with the special role which the organization called Social Democrats-USA has within the trade union movement, and the very high value that the reactionary George Meany bureaucracy has in the recent period put on the services of these right-wing social democrats. They now occupy the "ideological" posts in the AFL-CIO and have a sizable group on the 35-member Executive Council. We will examine why they are so valued by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the background to their current views on problems, and how their policies affect the conditions of the workers in the unions they control.

George Morris



## LONG IN THE SERVICE OF REACTION

Social democracy of the far-right brand is a foe of working class militancy and unity and is noted for its rabid anti-Sovietism. For more than a half century it has been allied with the most reactionary circles in the labor movement. In the recent period the top AFL-CIO bureaucracy has drawn on the services of right-wing social democracy to an even greater extent.

In 1972 the extreme right wing organized a merger of their Social Democratic Federation with the Socialist Party, then headed by Michael Harrington. Soon after, they staged a coup and abolished the organization as a party. They renamed it "Social Democrats-USA" and fitted it for service to the group around George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO. This step was designed to end even the pretense that the socialist movement must be independent of the parties of capitalism. Thereafter, the organization was remodeled to provide activists for the Meany bureaucracy within the Democratic Party. This change was announced in the midst of the 1972 presidential campaign, as Meany's group declared that the AFL-CIO would not endorse a presidential candidate. The practical effect of that decision, which the SDs supported, was to give support to Nixon by demobilizing and paralyzing organized trade union support for George McGovern.

Resigning on October 23, six months after "unification," from the co-chairmanship of the merged party, Harrington gave his reasons in a letter: 1) it is wrong for the party to identify itself with the Meany wing of the labor movement; 2) its support of Meany's election policy in 1972, ostensibly neutral, was actually a refusal to see that "defeating Nixon is the priority;" 3) the refusal of the majority in the "united" organization to support the demand for withdrawal from Vietnam; and 4) the majority's negative attitude toward the "new politics" movement that backed McGovern. Harrington also charged the right wingers with betrayal of the "historic party of Eugene V. Debs" and said that those in control were "doing the work of Richard Nixon." (Harrington letter, *The Nation*, November 13, 1972.)

Harrington, who is hardly a revolutionist (he often boasts of his opposition to the socialist countries), has since been trying to gather together the remnants of the old Socialist Party, to reconstitute

"the party of Debs." Three years have passed but his program is still vague and his achievement still very much short of the goal. He seems oriented more toward what he calls "the growing constituency of the educated" than toward the working class. But his characterization of those in control of SD-USA belatedly confirms the reactionary role of the U.S. brand of the social democratic right. After the split among the socialists, this role became even more pronounced. The candidate for president whom they favored in 1972 was Senator Henry Jackson—most noted for his opposition to detente.

They speedily implemented their right-wing course after the split with Harrington. The leaders of SD-USA have little concern about rank and file mass pressure. The bulk of its effective membership is composed of elements not ordinarily likely to challenge a right-wing line. Such elements include full-time paid officials and staff members of an assortment of organizations they have controlled for many years. Then there are the clerical employees of such organizations and the large number of Meany appointees and jobholders in unions under their control. In addition there are employees of the Yiddish-language daily *Forward* and of the Debs radio station they control. Such individual members as they do have are mostly aged retirees who have been with the right wing for decades.

The enhanced role that SD-USA has achieved in the AFL-CIO was well demonstrated at the tenth convention of the AFL-CIO in Miami Beach in October, 1973. With Meany's help their number on the executive council rose to at least five. This includes the newcomer, Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers. The SDs have a major influence in the international relations division as well as important influence in the Industrial Union Department and they hold major posts in the political action machinery and in the A. Philip Randolph Institute. They also have writers in the *AFL-CIO News*. Even Meany's assistant and speechwriter is a member of the executive committee of SD-USA.

Since the 1973 AFL-CIO convention the love between traditional "business unionism" and right-wing social democracy has warmed considerably.

What is the background to the position of the present-day SDs? Whence comes the "explanation" of Sol C. Chaikin, the new President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, who



in an interview (*New York Post*, June 7, 1975) stated that for 74 years the union didn't have Blacks or Hispanics in leadership because they lacked "motivation" for labor leadership? Whence comes the current campaign of the SDs against what they call "discrimination in reverse" and against "affirmative action" to advance equal rights? Why do the SDs surpass even the Pentagon men in sabre-rattling against the Soviet Union? Why do the SDs show more resistance than any other section of labor to opening the way for younger men and women in leadership? Why, although the unions they run have a majority of women members, do they virtually exclude women from top posts? Why are wages and working conditions for workers in the unions the SDs control inferior to those of almost all other workers?

### SINCE GOMPERS' DAYS

In pre-World War I days, when the American Federation of Labor was headed by its founder, Samuel Gompers, even the conservative-led Socialist Party was anathema in top labor circles. But there was always common ground between the extreme right, pro-war, racist, class collaborationist section of the SP leadership and the Gompers group. They collaborated in support of World War I and in defense of the AFL bureaucracy against rank and file movements. (In 1912 the SP executive expelled William D. Haywood, a founder and leader of the Industrial Workers of the World.) The SP supported the racial exclusion policy of the AFL and even defended racketeering and gangsterism in some unions.

There was sharp conflict in the SP at its St. Louis convention in 1917. The right wing was defeated with the passage of a left-sponsored resolution opposing United States entry into the World War. After the war, the overwhelming majority of the SP membership, including several entire state organizations, backed the formation of the Communist Party. Subsequently, more sections of the SP shifted to the Communists.

On the other hand, some of the major right wing spokesmen in the SP found their natural ground in the major capitalist parties.

What was left in the SP steadily degenerated politically. The process was inadvertently confirmed in 1936 in a statement by David Dubinsky, then President of the International Ladies Garment

Workers Union, the main union base of the right wing—and its main financial support. Dubinsky said: "I have come to the conclusion that socialism, certainly the orthodox variety, will never work. Trade unionism needs capitalism like fish need water." (Cited in *Tailor's Progress*, Benjamin Stolberg, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1944, page 197.) That statement just about sums up the course of right social democracy.

After the Russian Revolution and the establishment of the first socialist republic the relationship between the right wing leaders of the SP and the AFL's top bureaucracy really began to warm up. The major link between these "socialists" and the AFL hierarchy was anti-Communism and hatred of the new socialist power. The right wingers were especially useful because they had reputations as "socialists" and because they were articulate in spewing vicious propaganda against the Soviet state. But there was more than just common hatred of the fast rising Marxist-Leninist movement in the world. The basic concept of unionism that Gompers fathered in the United States, and Dubinsky summed up so plainly, is still the guideline for most top U.S. labor officials. It conceives of unions as part of the capitalist system, that workers have a common interest with their employers and need only an organization through which to claim a "rightful" share of the bounties of capitalism. The basic position of the reform socialists, with the SD-USA carrying it to its logical conclusion, is that by "practical" cooperation with capitalism reforms can be won, accumulating in time to the level of what they call "socialism."

The trend which began in 1917 with the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist power in the Russian empire clashes head on with the policy of cooperating with capitalism.

The trade union bureaucracy has another "practical" interest in anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism. Anti-Communism is a convenient weapon to oppose rank-and-file movements for democratic union reforms—movements which oppose racketeering, sweetheart contracts, racism and do-nothing unionism. Very often the red label is deliberately tagged onto opponents or rank-and-file groups that haven't the remotest relation to Communism, and may not even be left.

In the recent period anti-Communism has declined in usefulness as a weapon. But in the early twenties when, under the leadership



of William Z. Foster, a rank-and-file movement was launched and made rapid progress, the Gompers bureaucracy tagged it a Moscow plot and countered with expulsions and violence to outlaw it in labor ranks. What could be more convenient than the service of "socialists" in Red-tagging and fingering opponents of the bureaucracy? The extreme right among the socialists has been most persistent in keeping the red-baiting tactic alive.

### RACIST "SOCIALISM"

The depths to which the right-wing "socialists" have fallen can be measured by the brazenness of their racism. William English Walling, one of the early leaders of the Socialist Party, was distinguished from others by his opposition to racism. He was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). We are indebted to him for much documentation of the pre-World War I debates within the SP on the "race question" that took place at a number of the party's conventions. (*Progressivism and After*, William English Walling, Macmillan, New York, 1914, Appendix, pages 377-389.)

Walling quotes extensively from speeches on the issue of immigration at the 1910 and 1912 conventions. He singles out the remarks of those who were aligned with Victor Berger, who was the first Socialist Congressman (Wisconsin) and who is generally described as the "father" of U.S. social democracy. Berger's biographer, Sally M. Miller, termed him the "patron saint" of social democracy. She wrote: "he chose to follow socialist theories as amended to American conditions, and when necessary to look beyond orthodoxy." (*Victor M. Berger, The Promise of Constructive Socialism*, Sally M. Miller, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1972.)

Let us see how Berger and his associates "amended" socialism to U.S. conditions. As Walling quoted him at the 1910 convention: "We are all of the same type, of the same sort of thinking, may fight occasionally, but after all our mode of thinking is very much the same. But, comrades, it is entirely different with those other races. They have their own history of about 50,000 years. That cannot be undone in a generation, or in two generations or in three generations."

In Ray Ginger's *The Bending Cross, A Biography of Eugene Victor*

*Debs* (Russell, 1969, reprint of Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 1949, page 259), Berger is quoted from an editorial he wrote in his *Social Democratic Herald* eight years earlier: "There can be no doubt that the Negroes and Mulattoes constitute a lower race—that the Caucasians and indeed even the Mongolians have the start on them in civilization by many thousand years—so Negroes will find it difficult ever to overtake them."

Adolph Germer, wartime secretary of the SP, blamed the Black workers in the South for being slow to organize and concluded "it is impossible to do anything for them." Robert Hunter, another top SP leader, echoed Germer's racism by support of the AFL's and the government's policy of excluding Asian immigrants. He said Asians would constitute "many non-voters" and would be used for "breaking down unions" and to "break down the Socialist revolt."

Stitt Wilson, who was Socialist Mayor of Berkeley, California, also sounded off against the Asian "peril" and complained that Asians are used to "flood your precincts" all over the world to the advantage of the capitalist class.

A delegate named Wolff, representing the Jewish Socialist Federation, consisting almost entirely of immigrants from Europe, was quoted by Walling as favoring exclusion of Asians, inferentially supporting the view that European immigrants are "civilized" while Asians "injure the standard of living of the American workers."

Joshua Wanhope, another member of the SP National Committee, told the convention that Asians are "not an assimilable quantity." "The Hindus, the Chinese, and to a lesser extent, I admit, the Japanese, are in an evolutionary stage which is really thousands of years behind that of the European nations."

At issue was the SP's attitude to the resolution against immigration bars on racial grounds, adopted at Stuttgart by the 1907 Socialist International Congress. It was Ernest Untermann, chairman of the SP's resolutions committee, who brought out a report of the majority opposing admission of non-whites while favoring immigrants from "civilized" Europe. Here is a section of his report as quoted by Walling:

The race struggle is as much a struggle as the class struggle. The race question will still be with us even after we shall have the Socialist Republic, only it will be divested of the class struggle.



gle character. . . . The question as to what race shall dominate the globe must be met as surely as the question as to what class shall own the world. We shall neglect our duty to the coming generation of Aryan peoples if we did not do everything in our power, even today, to ensure the final race victory of our own people.

Sometimes the party, acting for immediate interests of the working class, must come into apparent conflict with its ultimate ideals through and despite these immediate contradictions. Let the socialists of these countries organize their own cooperative commonwealth themselves first, when they have that organization, then let them talk to us about international solidarity. . . . The Aryan race will always occupy a certain geographical territory and what the Asiatics will do in coming years does not concern us at present. . . . The same with the Negroes in the South. Wherever the Negroes get control they stand aloof from the white men and will not work with them. In other words there is a race feeling. . . . While we stand together for international solidarity, we should be false to our socialist agitation if we insisted first on doing away with our race prejudice.

Such is the shameful debate that went on and on ad nauseam. The minority of three on the convention committee, of which Leo Laukki of the Finnish Socialist Federation (which eventually became part of the Communist movement) was representative, called for support of the Stuttgart stand, rejected the claim that it is the "non-whites" who don't want to unite with others, and proposed that the SP name an organizer to bring socialist ideas to Asian immigrants and called for equal rights for all.

The majority resolution passed 55 to 50. Morris Hillquit, who led a "center" group but who voted against the Stuttgart resolution at the International Congress, sought for the sake of "unity" a vaguely worded substitute that would be meaningless, but it failed to get a majority.

The above KKK-like fulminations in the name of "socialism" make disgusting reading. Some may question the need to recall it after more than half a century. But I deem it appropriate to do so because it reflects the sludge from which present-day right wing social democracy sprouted. Also, as we will see later, in a basic sense their

policy retains much of the racism cited, although today it may be camouflaged in subtler forms.

## WAR "SOCIALISTS"

Significantly, the SP leaders who were outspoken racists have also been the loudest advocates of war against the socialist countries. They cheered the U.S. military intervention in Russia soon after the Revolution and cooperated with Gompers' efforts against the workers' republic. Their hopes of war run high each time anti-Soviet tensions rise. They were especially hopeful when the Nazis invaded the USSR in June, 1941. Cold war tensions during the Korean and Vietnam wars raised their hopes. And the prospects ran high again in October, 1973, when war broke out in the Middle East.

The clearest insight into the social democratic mind came some weeks after December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was bombed and the U.S. declared war on the fascist Axis. Nathan Chanin, leading social democrat, secretary of the Workmen's Circle, a Jewish fraternal society controlled by the SDs, wrote in the January 1942 issue of its publication *Friend*: "The last shot will be fired by the United States and from that shot the Stalin regime too will be shot to pieces."

This brought forth widespread anger among Jewish workers, followers of social democracy, especially in the ILGWU. But more than a year later, in April, 1943, addressing a convention of the Workmen's Circle, Dubinsky said: "When Chanin wrote that the Stalin dictatorship will be shot to pieces, the accusation also fell on me and Abe Cahan [then editor of the *Forward*-G.M.]. I want to declare here openly that I am in agreement with Chanin's words." (*The Case Against David Dubinsky*, William Weinstone, New Century Publishers, New York, 1946, page 70, quoted from *Forward*, May 3, 1943.)

In April, 1943, *Justice*, the official publication of the ILGWU, stated in an editorial that the USSR "is a masked fascism" worse than Hitler's, and called for an anti-Soviet alliance. This was at a time when fascist hordes occupied almost all of Europe and had penetrated very deeply into the USSR. The fate of the world hung mainly on the allied strength of the United States and the USSR.



This was the very period that marked the high point of the roundup of six million Jews for cremation. The number might have been at least another million were it not for the mass transfer by the Soviet Union of Jews from Western lands to the East, beyond the reach of the Nazi forces. The magazine *New Leader*, an English language publication subsidized by the ILGWU, had the same line as *Justice*.

Is there any difference between the views of the SD-USA of today and those of 30 years ago? Not to anyone who knows their real position, as we shall see in the following pages.

### THE COLD WAR THEY SOUGHT

Throughout World War II, the U.S. right-wing socialists, financed by the ILGWU, pressed their anti-Soviet campaign, notwithstanding the U.S.-Soviet anti-Fascist alliance and Hitler's deep and dangerous penetration of Soviet territory. With David Dubinsky, ILGWU president, as executive secretary, the SDs set up the "American Labor Conference on International Affairs" (ALCIA). Printed on the masthead of its *Bulletin* were the names of several social democratic sponsors, heads of AFL and CIO unions. The guiding spirit of ALCIA was Raphael Abramovitch, one of a collection of social democratic "refugees" from European lands that gathered in the United States under Dubinsky's wing and support. They were an assortment of hard-bitten anti-Sovieteers who dreaded the prospect that with the end of the war many countries, if not all of Europe, would go socialist. Abramovitch, who headed anti-Soviet plotters within the newly established Soviet republic, was one of the chief leaders of the right-wing social democrats in old Russia and a bitter enemy of Lenin.

This emigre gang, sustained by ILGWU funds and clustered around Abramovitch, was motivated by only one thought: that the war against Hitler Germany should eventually be directed against the Soviet Union and end with the overthrow of workers' power in the USSR. In December, 1944, when the defeat of fascism was near, ALCIA held a conference in New York that brought together the U.S. social democrats; the stable of refugees; the AFL leaders, among them William Green, AFL president; Matthew Woll, head of the AFL's international affairs; Jay Lovestone, on the ILGWU payroll and collaborator with Woll; and an assortment of "liberals" in the

SD camp. The conference was in preparation for a post-war Europe that would be to SD satisfaction, and for turning the guns against the Soviet Union.

On March 1, 1945 in the *Forward*, Abramovitch set the tone for this group with an article estimating the Yalta Conference at which the heads of the United States, the USSR and Great Britain came to terms on the outlines of a postwar agreement. He wrote: "The Yalta declaration on liberated Europe is an empty shell if it is to be interpreted as an earnest guarantee of European democracy. It is not an earnest guarantee and cannot be as long as the allies cannot and do not want to quarrel with Russia." Abramovitch welcomed the idea that the United States assumed an interest in "Europe's order," but he insisted that it must involve a "quarrel" with the Soviet Union.

A year later, in March, 1946, the signal was given for the "quarrel" with the Soviet Union. Winston Churchill, visiting the United States, delivered his speech at Fulton, Missouri, in which the term "cold war" was coined. This was speedily followed with preparations on the domestic front for the new war to follow. The Taft-Hartley Law, designed as a club over unions and particularly to bar Communists and other progressives from union leadership, was enacted. A witch-hunt drive was launched long before anyone even heard of Senator Joseph McCarthy. Government workers and many workers in private employment were screened. Many were dismissed for "dangerous" or allegedly "subversive" beliefs. The Smith Act was invoked against Communist leaders. Later the McCarran Act, even more dangerous to civil liberties, was enacted. In 1947 the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was set up, designed as a new type of imperialist weapon, to ring the entire globe with spy machinery, and forces big enough to overthrow and set up governments. It was fitted for the "world leadership" role the United States was seeking to assume.

The right-wing SDs raised no objections to all this. They were delighted with the way things were shaping up, not disturbed by that fact that even some moderate liberals were victims of the witch-hunts. Not a hair was touched of those with pronounced SD persuasion.

At first the CIO leaders protested the repressive acts, but by 1949 the commitment of the CIO leaders in support of the cold



war led them to expel left-led CIO unions with a million members for refusal to toe the cold war line. As for the AFL leaders, they were fully in tune with these developments.

The SDs were encouraged by a number of factors. With the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, during whose administration the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union against Hitler fascism was formed, Harry S. Truman stepped into the White House. (In 1941, Truman, a U.S. Senator, had expressed the hope that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would bleed each other to death.) The SDs saw themselves in demand for the assortment of services the "world leadership" perspective involved. They tied their entire outlook to that perspective, as had the leaders of the AFL and CIO. This policy enhanced their role in the service of the trade union bureaucracy. They mobilized their "liberal" backers for the cold war. They were also a source for much personnel for the newly established CIA and for "labor attaches" to U.S. embassies, providing cover for CIA "labor" operatives.

The center for this "labor" mobilization for the cold war was under the direction of a quartet consisting of AFL Vice-President Matthew Woll, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany, Dubinsky, and Jay Lovestone whom the ILGWU financed. Lovestone conducted his clandestine operations from a small New York office set up for him by Dubinsky. The public front for the foursome was the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC) with Lovestone as director. Ostensibly, the FTUC was gathering funds for "CARE" packages for friendly leaders in Europe's unions. Actually those were funds to "save" European unions from "Communism."

By the time the CIA became interested in a "labor" cover for agents in foreign lands, the AFL's foursome had already built up a good start for it. Serafino Ramualdi, a social democrat from Italy whom Dubinsky picked up, became the chief Latin American operative, working under Woll's supervision. Irving Brown, close collaborator with Lovestone, became "roving ambassador" in Europe. Henry Rutz, a Milwaukee social democrat, headed operations in West Germany. Harry Goldberg was stationed in Indonesia. Richard Deverall was stationed in Tokyo as the Asia operative. As Deverall told Joseph C. Goulden, Meany's biographer, in an interview soon after the Asia agent's retirement: "Many times I was in Lovestone's office in New York, one of those he got from Dubinsky, and a man

would come in with a stack of crisp new hundred-dollar bills. Lovestone would sign a receipt for them. Sometimes he would ask me to take money to Washington for him. . ." Deverall added that when he first came under Lovestone's direction he didn't know the source of the hundred-dollar bills, but later "satisfied myself" that they came from the CIA. (*Meany, the Unchallenged Strong Man of American Labor*, Joseph C. Goulden, Atheneum, New York, 1972.)

For many years in the Left press, usually in my column in the *Daily Worker* and the *Daily World*, the involvement of Lovestone and the entire AFL international affairs machinery in CIA operations was often disclosed. But it was not until the 1966-67 CIA scandal blow-up that the general public became aware of this shameful fact. (See *CIA and American Labor* by George Morris, International Publishers, New York, 1967.) The exposure was of the use made by the CIA of existing or fake "foundations" through which it channeled funds for a number of cooperating labor, student, cultural and religious organizations which provided CIA covers.

Thomas Braden, who in the early fifties was special assistant to Allen W. Dulles, "father" and then director of the CIA, spread much of the details of the AFL-social democrat-CIO involvement in the CIA's operations across the pages of the *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1967. Braden told how on one occasion he gave \$15,000 to Irving Brown "to pay off the strong arm squads in the Mediterranean ports" used against the French left-led dock workers. Braden claimed credit for the idea "to give cash along with advice" to those "who could help the United States in the battle with Communist fronts."

Braden said "labor was the big problem" and "a source of considerable worry" in the CIA. "Into the crisis stepped Lovestone and his assistant, Irving Brown," wrote Braden. "With funds from Dubinsky's union, they organized Force Ouvriere, a non-Communist union (in France). When they ran out of money, they applied to the CIA. Thus began the secret subsidy of free unions which soon spread to Italy." He disclosed that the CIA placed \$2,000,000 annually in Lovestone's hands for payoff to anti-Communist agents in labor ranks in Europe and developing lands. At one time, he wrote, the CIA sought some accounting of the expenditure and complained to the others of the AFL's foursome. "Lovestone and his bunch are doing a good job, what more do you want?" was their reply, Braden wrote. (For more



details see *Rebellion in the Unions: A Handbook for Rank and File Action* by George Morris, New Outlook Publishers, New York, 1971.)

Such is the background to the current international affairs position of Social Democrats-USA, and their present service to the Meany bureaucracy. Together with Meany they outshout all sabre-rattlers against detente with the socialist countries. Together with Meany they demand ever higher military budgets, totally disregarding the fact that this means shelving and forgetting a national health program and other long postponed social welfare needs.

### THE LOWEST WAGES

With anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism the priority, right-wing social democrats, as a general rule, neglect the social-economic needs of the members of the unions they lead. They are known for the lowest wages, lowest pensions, inferior working conditions and fringe benefits. The hallmark of their policy on wage contracts is the maintenance of what amounts to a partnership with the employers. But the leaders of the 75-year old ILGWU don't phrase it that way. They say they are a "responsible" union, always concerned "for the good of the industry." Under this policy, they often justify pass-up of a wage raise, accept settlements for "peanuts," close their eyes to violations of wage agreements in the predominantly piece-work industries, or ignore the shipment of work to non-union contractors.

Women's and misses' outerwear workers, the largest group in the ILGWU, which includes the dress workers, averaged \$108.55 weekly in April, 1975, the latest figures at this writing. Workers on children's dresses and women's underwear averaged \$101.91 weekly in the same month. It was in that month, in fact, that the Labor Department announced that the government's so-called "poverty line" had gone up to \$5,050 a year for a family of four. Women's garment shops are very seasonal. A dress worker would have to work 52 weeks in the year to come up to the average earnings and then barely pass the poverty line. Very few have a full year's work.

The Labor Department's lowest of the three "adequate" budgets for urban families, now set at \$9,198 a year, is out of the question for women's garment workers. The big majority earn half that amount or less.

The situation is about the same for workers in the men's garment

field, represented by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, also under top social democratic control. The average wage for workers on men's and boys' outerwear, the section of the industry with the relatively higher skills and earnings, was \$123.45 weekly in April, 1975. In men's and boys' furnishings, it was \$97.19 weekly that month, and in shirt manufacture it was still lower—\$92.57 weekly. And those averages came after the raises won in the ACW's first industry-wide strike in fifty years. (The above figures are from the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

In their earlier years the two principal needle trade unions were among the more progressive in the country and often called industry strikes on a city or area wide scale. Today they seldom have strikes—and usually they are of a single shop or several shops. To the credit of the ACW, however, it has waged some significant organizing struggles in the South, most notably, the recent Farah Pants struggle in El Paso, Texas.

Workers in the ILGWU or ACW shops are often angered when they compare their earnings and other contract provisions with those of neighbors in unions not half the age of the garment organizations. Hospital workers in New York, members of District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, are of much the same composition as the ACW and ILGWU—Black, Hispanic and of West Indian origin. The hospital workers earn about 50 percent more than the garment workers. A pension of \$100 a month of which the ILGWU leadership boasts (it was \$75 as late as 1974), looks ridiculous by comparison to District 1199 pensions. The vacation allowance for most ILGWU workers is pitiful compared to that of hospital workers. The same goes for health care.

Right wing bureaucracies became entrenched in a number of New York unions in the mid-twenties with the aid of strong-arm elements. The garment trades were the special target of racketeers. Prominent right-wing Socialists sought the services of gangsters, to seize control of unions or hold onto control against the opposition of rank and file movements. One such notorious case was the seizure of the New York City organization of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers by Abraham Beckerman heading a group of right wing Socialists (see *Sidney Hillman, Statesman of American Labor*, Matthew Josephson, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1952). Similarly, a group of "Socialists" headed by Morris Kauffman seized control of the International Fur Workers and held it for a period through bloody terror.



In the early thirties, after a progressive rank and file movement ousted the racketeers from the fur union, Kauffman's "Socialists" were among those indicted along with the kingpins of the gangsters, Louis (Lepke) Buchalter and Harry (Gurrah) Shapiro, then the New York leaders of organized gangsterism. The indictments and convictions were made possible because of the courage of a number of Communists and other progressives active in the struggle, including the Communist leader Irving Potash, who testified against the murderous gangsters.

Similarly, Philip Zausner, a "Socialist," held control of Painters District Council 9 in New York through gangster terror. His machine was finally ousted by a rank and file movement led by the Communist Louis Weinstock.

A rank and file movement in the ILGWU in New York was strong enough in the mid-twenties to win locals that had the overwhelming majority of the membership. It was the use of gangsters, by the forces who are today still in control of that union, that forced a split. This brought on a period of strife between the ILGWU and the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union formed by the expelled locals. Until the revival of unions in the mid-thirties, the ILGWU was a skeleton under clique control, with scarcely any effective unionism in the shops. The general orientation was away from the earlier militancy, towards "good relations" with employers. (See *The Fur and Leather Workers Union*, Philip S. Foner, Nordan Press, Newark, NJ, 1950.)

The garment industries became the lowest paying in the country, with the notable exception of the fur workers. Under progressive leadership, the fur workers rose to the top of the wage ladder in the United States. During a brief resurgence of militancy in the ILGWU in the mid-thirties, the left-led Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union dissolved and led its members back into the AFL affiliate. But the democracy promised by Dubinsky, newly elected to the presidency, didn't last long. The policy of collaboration with the employer associations soon became more pronounced.

Many workers who worked hard and sacrificed to build and rebuild the union began to run from it because of the low earnings. They did not even wait to qualify for its \$50 and \$60 monthly pensions for which they needed 20 full years service. Such service is hard to prove for seasonal workers who must often change small employers. Many had to wait for years after age 65 to be able to collect the

measly pension, because the reserves for pension funds were inadequate. Most of the ILGWU's living retirees (68,734 as of January, 1974) are in New York. The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies found in a New York City survey that 15.1 percent of the city's Jewish people are in poverty, with the aged especially affected. ILGWU retirees, participants in the union's early struggles, forced to live on very low Social Security payments because of low earnings, and on "pin-money" pensions, undoubtedly make up a substantial part of those in poverty.

A forty-year policy of low wages, maintained for the "good" of a "sick industry," didn't prevent the industry's high mortality rate—either through the bankruptcies of small employers or the exodus of many who looked for greener pastures. The low-wage garment field also became well "prepared" for the invasion of big conglomerate chains with many plants across the country. Jonathan Logan, with 38 plants employing 8,000 workers, is the largest. The ILGWU's 1974 convention was told that the union now has contracts with 13 such firms employing 21,000 workers. There are more of them not unionized. The belief that big, more profitable companies would lift wage standards has been dispelled. The plants of conglomerates, usually located in small towns promising low-pay labor, have been underpinning a general low-wage pattern in the industry. As these chains come in, numerous long-established union shops go bankrupt or close, and thousands of workers who had union conditions are either driven out of the industry or retire involuntarily on low pensions, if eligible.

## PERPETUATED OFFICIALDOM

The bureaucracies dominating the social democratic-led ILGWU, ACW and the Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers had a base mostly among the flood of East European immigrants of pre-World War I days. The overwhelming majority were Jewish and became the dominant force in these unions. Later an influx of Italians, mostly from Sicily, got under way. The Italians never got much beyond token representation in the ILGWU's top leadership, although in numbers they came close to becoming first in the ethnic composition of the union.

Low wages and irregular earnings forced many thousands of Jewish and Italian garment workers to shift to other industries. Black, Puerto



Rican, Chicano and Asian-American workers were the next wave into the industry and are currently the largest segment. Jewish workers are still concentrated in the cutting rooms and higher-priced lines where earnings are somewhat higher, but even in those fields their numerical predominance is diminishing.

Notwithstanding the decline of immigration and the change in composition in the shops, at the top leadership level and in most of the regions, the ethnic composition hardly differs from what it was half a century ago.

Some of the most militant struggles in U.S. labor history were fought by the intensely exploited Jewish workers during the first two decades of this century. These workers were a progressive influence within the labor movement of that time. But while many militant rank and file leaders came up out of those early struggles, others took the class collaborationist course, entrenched themselves in office, and demagogically exploited their ethnic base to perpetuate themselves in power for decades.

It took 74 years of the ILGWU's 75-year history before a Black woman was elected to the General Executive Board (GEB). It took almost as long before a Puerto Rican was elected to the GEB. Some of the others on the GEB have been on it for nearly half a century. There is hardly another union with as high an age level in top leadership, and American unions are notorious for the high age of their leadership.

About 85 percent of the ILGWU's membership are women. The ACW's membership also is mostly female, with Blacks and Hispanics predominant. But rarely have either of those unions had a woman on the GEB, and usually it was just one.

The result is an officialdom that is not representative of the membership. While collaborating in the exploitation of the Jewish workers, its policies also facilitate the work of anti-Semites. It discredits unionism. We have in fact a combination of racism, male supremacy, a contempt for younger workers, and defiance of the most elementary principles of democracy.

It shouldn't be hard to recognize the influence of the racism in right-wing social democracy detailed in earlier pages. That influence was evident in the already-cited interview with Sol C. Chaikin in the *New York Post* of June 7, 1975. The *Post* reporter, noting that Jews

are "down to a dwindling few" in the ILGWU, asked Chaikin how he could explain the 74-year absence of Blacks and Hispanics on the GEB. Chaikin replied, "When my father joined this union, he really felt he wanted to build a better world. He had a social vision. That was true of thousands who came to this union, but it was not true of Blacks and Hispanics until recently." Asked if that remark might not sound racist, Chaikin claimed that it was "because of background and acculturation. The last generation of Blacks and Hispanics did not come out of Czarist Russia or middle European countries, places of social ferment." Blacks and Hispanics, therefore, had a "lack of motivation," concluded Chaikin.

How very much like an echo of the speeches of the right-wing social democrats at the Socialist Party conventions in 1910 and 1912! Chaikin, of course, wouldn't say today that "non-whites" are a backward influence. But the code language of today is that they aren't "socially motivated." Why are Blacks, who have had a long and intense struggle through slavery and after, not "socially motivated"? To put the question in practical terms of ILGWU history, has the ILGWU's service to its members been so faultless that Black or Hispanic representation in its leadership couldn't improve it? On the basis of the historic record it can be said with certainty that if there were members of the GEB who related to the most exploited people in the membership, the union would be less class collaborationist, more militant and in much better shape on wages and working conditions, and on pensions.

Chaikin suggested that women, too, are not "motivated" for leadership in unions, repeating the hackneyed claim that women are only temporary workers, to help the families a bit, the same excuse we heard from Dubinsky for 40 years. The real "motivation" of those who run the ILGWU is to keep the old gang in power.

Why wasn't Edward Molisani, the "First" Vice-president, named to the presidency when ailing Louis Stulberg retired? The issue of succession came up in the ILGWU in the past. For that reason a "First" vice-presidency was designated. For many years Luigi Antonini held that post. He died before the presidency was vacant. Another Italian was named for the post, but he was passed over by the GEB. Chaikin, a lawyer who never worked in a garment shop, was named. Molisani, a right-winger like the rest of them, submitted.



## ORGANIZING NEGLECTED

Since the stormy thirties when many unions were established, or re-established on a firmer base, organizing of the unorganized has dropped off as a major interest in areas where the right-wing social democrats are in control. It is certainly not due to lack of funds. The ILGWU is among the richest unions in the country. But it invests a greater part of its funds in New York real estate than in organizing. And much of the organizing it does is for a specific plant or to chase a runaway from a union center. It is estimated that at least 200,000 workers in the women's garment field are not in the union. About half of that number are in the Southwest, mostly Chicano workers. The ILGWU's 1974 convention report showed that the Western States have only 2.2 percent of the union's 428,000 members—about 9,000 west of the Mississippi. In the Southeast, the other major unorganized section, only 5.3 percent of the membership is located, about 22,000.

The ACW has a better record, influenced by the Hillman era of the late thirties when the union financed and organized the drive in textile. It has unionized garment plants in the South and, recently, successfully fought the long Farah Pants strike.

The "model" of social democratic stagnation—really a steady decline—is the Textile Workers Union of America. This union had its origin in the sweeping CIO organizing drive of the late thirties. The Textile Workers Organizing Committee (TWOC), under Hillman's direction, financed mainly by the ACW, had a membership of nearly 400,000 under contracts when the TWU was formally constituted at a convention in 1939. The historic mistake was the leadership setup in this union, consisting of a group of social democrats headed by Emil Rieve.

These right wing SDs devoted an enormous amount of energy to fighting Communists and other progressives who had been actively engaged in organizing textile workers while Rieve was still in the Hosiery Workers Union. TWU Local 1874, with 10,000 members, had a leadership of militant progressives, including Communists such as George Meyers, past President of the Maryland-District of Columbia CIO Industrial Union Council and presently National Labor Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A. Under this leadership, Local 1874 broke new ground in winning advances for the workers in the Celanese plant in Cumberland, Maryland and for textile workers generally. Yet Rieve, TWU Vice-president Herbert Payne and other

right wing SDs deeply resented these advances and instead kept up a constant campaign against the progressive leadership of Local 1874. They stooped so low as to work with the most anti-union company-minded elements and the FBI. Rieve blocked a resolution presented by Local 1874 condemning the Ku Klux Klan at the 1947 TWU Convention in Atlantic City.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council's report to the October, 1973 convention of the Federation showed that the TWU represented 117,000 members. Possibly some allowance has to be made for the fact that some unions skimp on membership reports to reduce their per capita payments to the AFL-CIO. But the AFL-CIO convention records show that since 1955 the TWU's membership declined uninterruptedly from 203,000 to 117,000. Most of the major textile chains, like J.P. Stevens, Cannon Mills and Burlington Industries, are still unorganized. Only in August, 1974 did the TWU win a J.P. Stevens plant election, but after many months still has no contract. For many years the TWU pressed its organizing mostly in the courts and in the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), often scoring a legal victory against the big chains and getting good publicity. But the well-known historic fact that it takes mass struggle to organize workers, as had been done in the union's early days, has been forgotten.

The past hung heavily over the union's reputation among the workers. Under Rieve's leadership the TWU's position was much like the ILGWU's and the ACW's on collective bargaining. It was always concerned whether the industry could "afford" a substantial raise. On one occasion in the fifties, when Rieve agreed to skip a wage round "for the good of the industry," he was praised editorially in the *Wall Street Journal* as a "labor statesman." Eventually his own team ganged up against him and had him dishonorably eliminated in the belief that this would improve the TWU's image. But it was a vain effort.

## RACISM SPELLS DEFEAT

With the textile plants mostly in the South, the strategy of Rieve's group was to conform to the "traditions of the South" to win the workers. The union's paper, *Textile Labor*, followed a policy of publishing no photos that showed Black and white together. For many



years resolutions from locals to TWUA conventions supporting the anti-lynching bill, elimination of poll taxes, and other moderate anti-discrimination proposals were not reported for action on the floor by the delegates. They were usually held up until the last hours, and then deferred with a heap of other resolutions for action by the executive board. Eventually, when even some capitalist press reports took note of this trickery, the TWUA leaders "explained" that they didn't want to offend the feelings of the Southern delegates. The feelings of the Black workers didn't matter. On one occasion *Textile Labor* ran a photo of minstrel performers at an entertainment of a southern local.

The belief that such racism, or sweeping the issue under the rug, would attract the mostly white workers in Southern textile proved false. In more recent years, the force of the Black liberation movement and the increase of Black workers in Southern textile have forced the TWUA to abandon such open racism. The union's conventions pass anti-discrimination resolutions and *Textile Labor* often carries photos of Black and white workers in meetings and struggle.

Ironically, the major success of the TWUA in organizing a Southern plant, after many years of stagnation, was Oneita Mills in South Carolina, with 700 workers, mostly Black. The workers struck militantly for six months, demonstrating to the TWUA that Black workers in textile are like the fighting Black workers who waged the long and bitter Charleston hospital strike, the Memphis sanitation strike, and other struggles that were seen as historically very significant by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Two years after the Oneita strike there seems to be a little more interest in the TWUA among the large number of Blacks now in the industry, especially when facing bargaining representation elections. But while the industry's composition is changing, the composition of the union's leadership is dominated by white social democrats who had been on Rieve's "team." An example is Sol Stetin, the President, who has been in top office since the union's birth.

There are signs that considerable pressure is building up in the ILGWU and the TWUA for organization of the unorganized, mainly in the South and Southwest. The unionized areas are seriously undermined, in terms of both wages and jobs, because of the growing non-union influence. The ILGWU suffered a substantial loss of membership in recent years due to bankruptcies and runaways from union centers.

New York City traditionally had more than half the union's membership. Now the union reports it is down to a third of the total. The 1974 convention therefore voted \$15 million for an organizing drive.

In textile, at this writing, negotiations are under way for a merger with the ACW. That may mean a more vigorous drive to organize the South, similar to the Farah operation.

## PERSISTENT RACISM

Earlier we cited history showing the ugly racist background of the right social democrats. But some sections of the Socialist Party, followers of the late Norman Thomas and of Michael Harrington, moved a distance away from their Klan-like forerunners. As already noted, those in SD-USA who influence unions still reflect the racism of the Socialist Party's foremost leaders prior to World War I.

In the thirties the SP had a short-lived revival, influenced by some of its sections that were in united fronts with Communists in the struggles of the unemployed and in the organizing upsurge that led to the founding of the CIO. But the June 21, 1930 *New Leader*, then the SP's organ, gave the Party's position on the "Negro Question" as follows:

"Almost all southerners believe in segregating the Negro and depriving him of the social and political rights that whites enjoy. The southern socialists must adjust their tactics to this state of affairs. It is certain that there never will be a thriving socialist movement in the South unless it is conducted in the southern style." (Quoted in William Z. Foster's *The Negro People in American History*, International Publishers, New York, 1954, page 402.)

James Denison Sayers, then a prominent SP member, wrote in the *New Leader* of December 3, 1932 of his tour in southern states, as follows: "Lay off that TNT mine in the South, I mean the race question. That is a problem that must be left to evolution; just as our forefathers had to wait for the riddance of their tails. . . . Propagate socialism among the educated Negroes in the South, yes, but do it quietly, through the medium of Southern Negroes. Win the white southerner to socialism and the race problem will solve itself naturally."

This article was written some weeks after 1932 presidential election returns that showed 900,000 votes for Norman Thomas. When Thomas addressed a campaign rally in Burlington, N.C., the *New Leader* of



November 11, 1932 reported, "Negroes coming into the hall were directed to the balcony." An SP spokesman explained that it was in accord with "the law of the land."

James Oneal, editor of the *New Leader* and one of the SP's prominent theoreticians, wrote in the December 17, 1932 issue that the party's Texas state convention voted to organize segregated branches for the Black members. The Detroit SP convention in 1934 upheld that segregation policy. The *New Leader* of May 25 that year reported that the SP May Day rally in San Antonio had as a speaker "S.W. Tanner of the colored branch."

The 1937 SP convention, held soon after the great General Motors sitdown strike, when the organizing sweep reached a high point, declared in its resolution: "Our own Negro comrades will be placed quietly and unobtrusively in positions of responsibility, guarding against, however, the danger of 'Black chauvinism' as well as 'white chauvinism.'"

That position was advanced by the Norman Thomas followers in control of the SP. The right-wing social democrats had by then departed and formed their own Social Democratic Federation, the organization they maintained until the ill-fated merger of 1972. By their position in 1937, the Thomas Socialists sought to distinguish themselves from the right-wingers, but their resolution showed that the SP was still influenced by the old racist position. It advanced the cry of "discrimination in reverse" against any affirmative step to break through discriminatory bars.

The late Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., the famed Black Communist leader who covered the SP convention in 1937 for the *Daily Worker* (June 6, 1937), observed that in discussion the speakers emphasized the "importance that there is capability" by Black persons as a condition for advancement. Ability by Black persons was regarded as an "exception," he observed. Instead of boldly advancing Black workers to leading positions as the Communists have always done, the SP "holds them back until they make the grade," Davis wrote. He pointed out that the use of the term "Black chauvinism" was a handle for denying leadership to minorities. The decline of the SP membership to 6,000 soon afterward demonstrated again the futility of trying to build a mass base by playing the racist game.

Several years after the 1937 convention, the "discrimination in reverse" cry was heard at a succession of United Automobile Workers

and United Steel Workers conventions to beat down progressive rank and file proposals for the election of Blacks to top offices. The issue came to a full-dress all-day debate at the 1943 convention of the UAW in Buffalo, with Walter Reuther's group putting forward certain of its Black backers to oppose such proposals. The argument of Reuther's people, mostly backers of Thomas in the SP, was to the effect that when "capable Negroes" emerge, they'll be elected. It took 20 more years before a constitutional provision was voted by the UAW providing for a board membership at large to be filled by a Black person—the very proposal Communists had made 20 years earlier. But that came after an earlier convention from which the Black delegates walked out, their spokesman recalling that he was one of those who had supported Reuther on the issue in 1943. "Black chauvinism" has also been the stock answer against election of Blacks to top office in the Steel union, which still has an all-white executive board.

The "discrimination in reverse" cry becomes a particularly vicious form of racism because, as years and decades pass without election of Blacks or Hispanics to top posts, the implication is fed that Black and Hispanic workers do not acquire the "capability" to rate high posts.

Time has widened the gap between the blatant racism of the right-wing and of those socialists who shook off some of that early racism. In the labor movement, those who oppose the Dubinsky-Shanker types, like President Jerry Wurf and others in the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, show their distinction by the many Blacks in office at all levels, including the secretary-treasurer William Lucy. In the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, in part due also to merger with the left-led Packinghouse Workers and Fur and Leather Workers, Blacks hold many top positions. Patrick Gorman, the major top officer, seems to prefer Harrington's group.

In the right-led unions, however, the old smell still offends the nostrils. Until several years ago there were barely a score of Blacks in Cutters Local 10. Once with 10,000 members but now down to less than 6,000, the Cutters are the highest paid craft in the ILGWU shops. In recent years, due to a chain of developments in the struggle including court decisions on discrimination and an active interest in the case by the NAACP, there has been a partial breakthrough. But what has been the effect of some 70 years of the racist limiting of



the local to a virtual all-white composition? An industry known as "cut-up shops" has sprung up. Many of the major garment shops have contracted out their cutting work to those shops due to lower cost. These "cut-up shops," non-union, have been employing many Black and Hispanic workers at lower pay. After unsuccessful efforts to boycott such shops, the social democratic officialdom of Local 10 was forced to wage a campaign to draw the cutters away from those shops. They offered membership and jobs to the minorities in the "cut-up shops" and even named a Black business agent to concentrate on the campaign. Such admission of Black and Hispanic cutters is progress, of course. But why did it take so many years and so great a cost to the workers? (At this writing the union's effort to wipe out the "cut-ups" has had only minimal success.)

For many years Dubinsky and his successor Louis Stulberg relied on their well staffed and financed publicity department to give the union a popular image. It often got a "good press" against charges of discrimination that came before government agencies and, in 1963, before a Congressional committee headed by the late Rep. Adam Clayton Powell. On the latter occasion, when Herbert Hill, Labor Secretary of the NAACP, documented charges of discrimination in the ILGWU, the union scratched the NAACP off its list for donations.

### ALBERT SHANKER'S RACISM

One of the newer lights of right social democracy is Albert Shanker, who has emerged as one of the more articulate spokesmen of the SDs in service to the Meany bureaucracy. In the relatively few years since he gained prominence, he has built up a shameful record of racism. In almost every organization or institution under SD control Shanker holds a post. When he won the presidency of the American Federation of Teachers in 1974 at a \$33,000 a year salary, he insisted on continuing as president of the United Federation of Teachers (the New York City local) at \$25,000 a year. In addition, when a unification of the New York State AFT and National Education Association locals set up the New York State United Teachers in 1972, Shanker took the post of executive vice-president of the merged state organization at an additional \$25,000 a year. Shanker is also Vice-president of the Jewish Labor Committee, a director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, treasurer of the League for Industrial Democ-

racy, and on the executive of the Workers Defense League—all SD-controlled bodies. As one of the SD members on the AFL-CIO executive council, he is most favored by the Meany bureaucracy for chores related to "world affairs."

Shanker and Sol Chaikin are of the newer breed of SDs, replacing the older generation of the Dubinsky type, and out to "modernize" social democracy. Shanker first gained the national limelight in 1969 as leader of a two-month strike in New York. But it wasn't a strike for higher wages, more jobs, or better working conditions—it was a strike against a ghetto community in the Ocean Hill and Brownsville area of Brooklyn.

At issue was an experiment in school decentralization and community control in a district of Black and Hispanic people who had been struggling for better education for their children and a respect for the heritage and traditions of children of minority peoples. The aim of the strike was to kill that experiment, to prevent its possible wider application in forms that would give minority parents a meaningful say on school matters. The Shanker-led strike was a follow-up of a slush fund set up by the New York City United Federation of Teachers (UFT), reportedly half a million dollars, for lobbying against pending state legislation giving communities more say on the education and treatment of children.

The strike kept almost a million children out of school for two months and turned into a racist attack on the ghetto communities. The Shanker group unleashed a vicious propaganda campaign, falsely charging that the movement in the community was anti-Semitic. The Shankerites denounced Mayor John V. Lindsay, suggesting that he should be "Mayor of Cairo." The idea of giving non-white communities more say on education was termed "racism in reverse."

While the Meany-controlled AFL-CIO executive council and the New York State AFL-CIO applauded Shanker's strike, a large section of the New York labor movement with unions of more than a hundred thousand members formed a coalition in opposition to the strike. The demand for more Black and Puerto Rican teachers was closely related to the demand for more consideration of the traditions and heritage of minorities and a better attitude towards their children. The number of Black and Puerto Rican teachers is disproportionately low in New York.

Shanker's racism and bureaucratic domination were the main road-



block to a national merger of the 425,000-member AFT and the 1,700,000-member unaffiliated National Education Association (NEA). The NEA's representatives insisted that the merged organization should provide the secret ballot for elections, a guarantee of representation to minorities at all levels of the union's structure, and delegated gatherings. The NEA also opposed affiliation of the merged union with the AFL-CIO, repelled by some of the reactionary policies of the Meany bureaucracy. The Shanker group flatly rejected those conditions.

Following the breakdown of the merger talks, the journal of the UFT, the *New York Teacher*, of February 5, 1974, welcomed the decision of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to bring suit against the NEA on charges that its constitution, providing that minorities be guaranteed "at least 20 percent" representation at all levels in the union, is "unlawful, racist and undemocratic."

The SDs have launched a campaign headed by Sidney Hook in defiance of the "affirmative action" policy of government agencies, courts and even the Democratic Party towards bringing a closer balance racially and ethnically in employment, education and other fields. This places them to the right of even the government on this question. The SDs call such affirmative action "racism in reverse." They have gone before congressional committees, into courts and unions in their drive to kill even the minimal policy that is applied by the government to lessen discrimination.

These forces counted much on the case of Marco De Funis when it reached the Supreme Court, but they lost. De Funis, a white applicant for the law course at Washington State University, charged that his application was rejected, although the applications of a number of Blacks who, he alleged, had lower academic qualifications, were accepted. The lower courts ruled against De Funis. The Supreme Court let their decision stand, but ruled on only technical grounds. Sidney Hook and the SDs, particularly the Shanker forces, plan to bring more such cases to a test.

Subsequent developments indicated that the merger of the AFT and the NEA in New York State was largely influenced by a common desire of the two bureaucracies to combat the influence of minorities in education. This was proven when the NEA held its convention in Los Angeles in 1975. By a peculiar deal, the New York State United Teachers, combining the two unions in that state,

maintained dual affiliation—to both the AFT and the NEA.

At the Los Angeles convention, Shanker was in a hotel room directing the New York state delegation, which deluged the 8,000 NEA delegates with racist literature pitched mainly toward an amendment to the NEA constitution to delete the provision guaranteeing representation to minorities. The NEA defeated that effort in a secret ballot by an overwhelming majority and restated its conditions for a merger. The ironic twist is that the NEA has only in recent years come forward as an active union while the AFT has been a union for more than half a century. The NEA is by far the more militant, involved in many more struggles and strikes than the AFT.

In March, 1976, the Representative Assembly of the NYSUT voted to disaffiliate from the NEA. Following this, the NEA launched its own new affiliate in New York State, the New York Education Association.

The Hook-Shanker forces and the Zionists in B'nai B'rith scream against all affirmative steps against discrimination as "quotas." Defending Shanker's policies, *New America*, organ of SD-USA, in its February 23, 1974 issue, played on the fact that some decades back Jewish applicants to colleges faced quota obstacles to admission. It observed that the New York teachers local is composed "of predominantly Jewish teachers," implying that minority criticisms of that local's policies is "anti-Semitism."

The fact is that for Jewish college applicants conditions have changed, as is shown by the many thousands of Jewish teachers. That is not the situation for Black and Hispanic applicants. The old quotas aimed to *limit* the number of Jews in colleges. The guidelines for affirmative steps today, which Shanker calls "quotas," are applied to *increase* the number of Black and Hispanic students in colleges. Quite a difference!

It is even more ironic that many of the Jewish and Italian teachers in New York are sons and daughters of the garment workers who fought in the historic early struggles of the ILGWU and the ACW against the starvation pay, long hours, extremely miserable working conditions and impoverished life in their day. They even took work home. The common saying as they struggled was, "my children will not work in a garment shop." They pinched pennies to put their children through college. They could not have dreamed that their sons and daughters would be pitted against the present-



day ghetto people, now the most exploited, to the mutual disadvantage of all.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The international relations policy of the AFL bureaucracy, hitched to the U.S. imperialist kite since Gompers' days, never veered from that course. The right-wing SDs were closely allied with the bureaucracy, stressing mainly the anti-Soviet element and helping to give the policy a "liberal" covering. But the escalation of that course to a feverish level began soon after George Meany stepped into the AFL's top office as secretary-treasurer in 1940, and became interested mainly in international affairs.

David Dubinsky was most instrumental in encouraging that interest in Meany, and in exploiting his wartime involvement with the Office of Strategic Services, the predecessor of the CIA. The ILGWU was the early source of finances for activity that wasn't funded by the AFL. Dubinsky's American Labor Council for International Affairs was the center of the assortment of European social democratic refugees who became "contacts" abroad. From that relationship developed a trio—Meany, Matthew Woll and Dubinsky, which became a foursome with Dubinsky's addition of Jay Lovestone to direct the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC) as the group's public body.

In addition to providing a bridge to contacts abroad for the Meany group, the right-wing social democrats were also conduits to the CIO in which a coalition of left and "center" forces continued until 1947. This coalition held to a policy of post-war peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the United States and the socialist lands. A number of social democrats in the CIO, among them Emil Rieve and Walter Reuther, aided by the CIO's attorney Arthur Goldberg, gnawed within for support of the developing cold war policy. With the aid of government repression and the CIA this culminated in the expulsion from the CIO of unions with a million members in 1949. Then came the open collaboration of the AFL and the CIO for the founding of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions later that year, based on social democratic-organized splitaways from the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The right-wing SDs, having weakened and split the CIO, became

a more influential force within it. For the next five years they conditioned it to submit to merger with the AFL, which came about in 1955. This resulted in an AFL-CIO that siphoned off what little progressive influence there was left from the early CIO. In later years even Walter Reuther recognized that some of his own handiwork came to disastrous ends. Conflicts within the merged organization eventually led to disaffiliation of the United Automobile Workers. Ironically, exposures of AFL-CIO involvement with the CIA—an involvement to which Walter Reuther and his brother Victor were not strangers—was the precipitating issue that led to the UAW's exit.

The basis for the turn of events in the U.S. labor movement after World War II was the emergence of the United States as the strongest imperialist power and its "world leadership" role as protector of the capitalist order from advancing Communism. The bureaucracy of most U.S. unions, with the active "ideological" encouragement of the right-wing social democrats, projected the perspective of a partnership within this "world leadership." They pictured a rosy future for the U.S. working class and the labor movement from such a partnership. Many labor leaders had fancy visions of cabinet posts, ambassadorships and other forms of power in the belief that their services would rate such recognition—just as the services of social democrats were rated as they helped to give a "popular" image to their respective imperialist countries in Europe.

Every step that followed was in line with that perspective. All-out support for the Marshall Plan—U.S. financial aid to European lands to discourage progress toward socialism; acceptance of CIA money and other aid to halt a left trend in labor abroad; support of the Korean and Southeast Asia wars; cooperation with the CIA for setting up the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) as the agency's cover in Latin America; establishment of similar covers in Africa and Asia; providing "labor attaches" for U.S. embassies all over the world as legal labor covers for the CIA; neglect of the needs of the members at home, e.g., the shorter workweek and a national health bill; and support to the hysterical anti-Communist drive. All these were steps to further "labor's" role in the "world leadership" program. The extreme cold-war policy included adamant opposition to any U.S. relations—trade or otherwise—with socialist countries.

Nevertheless, even at an early stage of the cold war, there were



indications that the honeymoon with Europe's right-wing labor leaders wouldn't last long. Tensions began to sharpen within the social democratic led ICFTU as the United States penetrated aggressively into spheres in Africa, Asia and Latin America that had been dominated by Britain, France, Holland and Belgium. The assumption by the Meany group that the ICFTU and its affiliates, heavily financed by the AFL-CIO, would support such U.S. designs, were challenged by social democrats of Europe, who preferred the neo-colonial programs of their own capitalist rulers.

As the problems of post-war reconstruction in Western Europe faded and the unions became more involved in the day-to-day struggle against capitalist exploitation, the war-on-Communism theme also began to fade in West European unions. That brought new tensions in the "cold war" between Meany, supported by his U.S. social democratic allies, and the leaders of the ICFTU. At conference after conference Meany and Lovestone raved over the ICFTU's "betrayal" of its founding objective of fighting Communism. The AFL-CIO's substantial subsidy to the ICFTU was stopped. In February, 1969, Meany announced the withdrawal of the AFL-CIO from the ICFTU.

Meany's main reason was the failure of the ICFTU to enforce the prohibition on its affiliates of contacts or fraternal relations with the unions of the socialist countries. The ICFTU's heads, by no means happy with the trend, became powerless to stop a steadily increasing flood of visits of union delegations to the Soviet Union and other socialist lands. Such exchanges and visits led to fraternal relations. By 1973-74 the ICFTU's general office felt obliged to agree to some forms of mutual relations with the Communist-led WFTU.

The AFL-CIO is today isolated from the world labor movement. Withdrawal from the ICFTU came after the Meany-SD group set up their own "international" in the form of AIFLD with Meany as its chairman. Also involved are J. Peter Grace, head of the giant conglomerate W.R. Grace & Co., some three score other executives of the largest U.S. corporations, and several labor leaders. AIFLD, established in 1963, has been steadily financed by the government's Agency for International Development to the tune of about \$8 million a year. The purpose of AIFLD, covering for the CIA, is training Latin Americans for "labor leadership."

The "world leadership" perspective simply didn't turn out as its planners envisaged. It has been the socialist lands which have grown

in power and advanced, while U.S. policy has met with failure almost everywhere and is discredited. The former colonial lands did not submit to neo-colonialism. The disastrous defeat of U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia capped a list of failures. U.S. labor's bureaucracy, having tied itself to the "world leadership" perspective, shares the discredit that has befallen it.

## LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WAR

The end of the war in Southeast Asia left the Meany-SD group without a war to support, for the first time since the war against Hitler fascism—the war they didn't support willingly. But they did not have long to wait for new battlefields, as tensions broke out in the Middle East.

The AFL-CIO convention in Bal Harbour, Florida in October, 1973 was turned into a hysterical anti-Soviet orgy, recalling some labor conventions during the height of the cold war and McCarthyism. The people around Meany could hardly conceal their welcome of the new outbreak of war and an opportunity to beat the drums against the Soviet Union and detente.

The convention resolutions bristled with anti-Soviet attacks, threats to boycott Soviet ships, and calls for military confrontation with the Soviet Union. Shanker introduced a resolution for the setting up of a "world conference for intellectual freedom" in support of Alexander Solzhenitsyn and other "dissidents" in the Soviet Union. This was a move for revival of the conference bearing that name set up by the CIA in the 1950s, as disclosed by Thomas Braden.

That convention also showed that SD-USA was more closely involved with the AFL-CIO bureaucracy than ever before.

A number of developments contributed to the new influence the SDs were able to have in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy:

1. While their basic support in the unions they control, based on their demagogic misuse of the militant traditions of the Jewish workers, has been steadily declining, they still have a significant influence in the Jewish communities, and in some sections of the Jewish working class. SD-USA controls the Yiddish-language daily *Forward* and several organizations of Yiddish-speaking people—the Workmen's Circle, the Jewish Labor Committee, retiree groups, and a considerable number of Jewish activists in the staffs and officialdom



of the unions they control. It is through this machinery that millions of dollars are collected for causes such as Histadrut, which is the union center, major business organization, and base of Israel's governing party. SD-USA is therefore a convenient bridge for the AFL-CIO bureaucracy to Histadrut. Through this it influences the Israeli rulers to hang onto the coat-tails of U.S. imperialism and refuse to yield the occupied territories or compromise for peace in the Middle East. It is a means of using Middle East tensions to keep the anti-Soviet pot boiling. Peace and the welfare of the Israeli people are not at all their concern.

2. The Middle-East tensions were also welcomed as an opportunity to regain the support of intellectuals and liberals who had been cold war supporters but belatedly jumped on the anti-Vietnam War bandwagon. Zionist propaganda, misinformation about Israel and racism towards the Arab people influences such wavering liberals just as it influenced some union leaders who were in the Labor for Peace movement. SD influence was a factor.

3. Some changes took place in the leadership of the unions that are under SD-USA control or influence. Retirement of the heads of the ACW who followed a moderate pro-peace position brought into leadership Murray Finley and Jacob Sheinkman, respectively President and Secretary-Treasurer, both supporters of the SDs.

Retirement of Louis Stulberg elevated to the ILGWU's presidency Sol Chaikin, who is more articulate and aggressive and is now on the AFL-CIO executive council. In the textile union, Sol Stetin, who has been a right-wing social democrat for many years, became President and member of the AFL-CIO council in place of the politically blank William Pollack. Shanker took the American Federation of Teachers' presidency from David Selden, became a member of the executive council and, in effect, the chief spokesman for the SDs there.

4. Meany is more in need of the SDs on the executive council and in the AFL-CIO apparatus generally, because he needs their more aggressive support for his international affairs policy. During the Vietnam War the burden of voicing his position was almost entirely on him and the ILGWU leaders. The other members of the 35-member council hardly did more than rubber-stamp the documents prepared by Lovestone. They were aware that their members, like the U.S. people generally, either opposed the Vietnam War or were

cold to it. Meany also values the SDs as "ideologues" for his policies and to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Jay Lovestone. Meany has even gone so far as to shed his traditional squeamishness to the term "social democrat." He now addresses messages to social democratic gatherings, encouraging some naive SDs to feel that they have converted the 81-year-old Meany to "socialism."

SD-USA's role as prompter and instigator of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's anti-Soviet war incitement was developed in a statement of SD-USA's executive committee that appeared, in part, in the July 1975 *New America*, the newspaper of SD-USA. After a tearful review of the world scene—the Indochina "debacle," the revolution in Portugal, the "collapse" of Kissinger's earlier Middle East mission, and the 35-nation Helsinki agreements that "dismayed" them—U.S. policies were criticized for failing to challenge the growing "Communist threat."

But the full wrath of the SDs was released against the liberals in the United States who favor detente, peace, and the Helsinki accord. The statement said:

For almost a decade now liberals have done more than any single group to foster an appeasement and defeatist psychology in America. Their one-sided attacks on the "military industrial complex" and the CIA have had the originality of a broken record. . . . Though liberals heaped tons of contumely on Thieu and Lon Nol, they have not uttered an ounce of criticism of the victorious Vietnamese Communists . . .

George McGovern, "who epitomizes American liberalism," is singled out for special denunciation because he "clasped the hand of friendship" of Yasir Arafat and Fidel Castro.

But SD-USA is most bothered by the widespread opposition in the United States to the U.S. alliance with fascist regimes such as those of Chile, South Korea and Spain. They explain the difference between the "traditional despotisms" and Communist-led governments as follows: the fascist rulers, "undemocratic, inhumane and inimical of social democratic values as they may be—do not threaten international peace or democratic institutions or other countries in ways that are at all comparable to the threats posed by the more virulent Communist forces. Nor have despotic regimes of the right proved nearly so



resistant to democratic change as have Communist governments, none of which has ever been successfully transformed into anything approaching a democratic state."

It must be borne in mind, of course, that by "democracy," SD-USA means bourgeois democracy. The democracy of the working class and of developing countries they call "totalitarianism," because it excludes the imperialists and former capitalist rulers and their agents.

"We emphatically reject the notion, which is becoming regrettably popular in some liberal circles, that the central factor in determining whether or not the U.S. will engage in a military or political alliance with any country is the degree to which that country is democratic in character, free of corruption . . ." the SD-USA statement went on, and clinched the point with, "We clearly need military bases and alliances in areas of the Mediterranean, South Asia and other parts of the world where Western style democracies simply are non-existent."

Then, to put the liberals to shame, SD-USA observed: "It is one of the more significant ironies of modern times that the most outspoken proponent at the present time for a strong and united Europe is Communist China." The reference is to the active campaign of the Maoists for a stronger NATO and an aggressive stand against the USSR and detente.

### THE A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE

Due to increased mass pressure against discrimination in employment from rank and file and Black caucuses in some unions, the bureaucracies of labor organizations have in the recent period faced charges before courts and government commissions administering enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other related statutes. Frequently, leaders of unions and the union organizations have been co-defendants with employers in facing discrimination charges. Such charges are not as easily evaded today as they were with the earlier Fair Employment Practices Commissions that had no enforcement powers.

There is today also a more effective legal practice on the basis of anti-discrimination laws by the organizations of minority peoples

and by some of the more progressive unions. The government has been slow in enforcement. Almost a decade passed before some significant legal rulings were made on the basis of the 1964 Act. Some precedent-setting court decisions have illegalized long-practiced discriminatory employment systems, involving wage earnings, seniority and promotion rights. Especially noteworthy was the court ruling in the case of the Fairfield, Alabama plant of U.S. Steel, and some other steel cases. The courts outlawed the dual seniority lines which limited Black and other minority workers to employment on the least desirable, lowest-paid and dirtiest jobs. In the Fairfield case the court also ruled that workers who suffered denial of progression to higher paying jobs because of confinement to the "Black Line," when their seniority standing entitled them to preference for advancement, should be compensated by the company for the estimated loss of higher pay.

As a result of such developments, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission and other government agencies have been prodding companies in a number of industries, and the related unions, to enter into "consent decrees" to end discriminatory practices, and for back pay for some workers who lost higher pay opportunities. Such arrangements have been made in basic steel, telephone, and are pending in many other industries, although back pay amounts are still in dispute, as are some other details.

In any case it has become more difficult for employers and unions to get away with tokenism. Nor can union leaders or corporations soften the effect of publicity on their racist practices by publicly announcing donations to minority peoples' organizations or participation in functions honoring prominent Black or Hispanic personalities. The NAACP and other organizations of minority people are today more active for enforcement of civil rights laws. Because of this, tensions occasionally are sharp between them and Meany or the leaders of the ILGWU and the building trades unions. Years of delay or evasion of the realities have put the AFL-CIO and some of its affiliates before the public as co-defendants in the continuance of discriminatory practices that should have been challenged by the unions many years ago. To make matters worse, as in the steel case, some unions officially cooperate with the employers and the government to make the consent decree "settlements" as cheap and as face-saving as possible. The top union bureaucracies and the AFL-CIO's



leadership have always looked for every form of cover-up of their discriminatory practices. For that they have depended much on the services of the right-wing social democrats. Today they want that service more than ever. They get it from the ten-year-old A. Philip Randolph Institute, and the Jewish Labor Committee established in the mid-thirties, both under control of the SDs.

It may seem strange that the name of Randolph should figure in such service. A member of the Socialist Party since its early days and today chairman emeritus of Social Democrats-USA, Randolph was for many years a prominent challenger of the racist practices of the old AFL, and later of the AFL-CIO. As delegate of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, he often stood up at conventions and listed unions that openly or in subtle ways excluded Blacks. His demand for elimination of such bars was usually answered with the claim that the AFL and AFL-CIO did not have the power to compel affiliates to end discrimination. This is a false claim. Since Gompers' days the federation has had the power even to expel or threaten expulsion of unions. And it has used this power against unions alleged to be under Communist leadership.

Randolph figured in a number of mass demonstrations against racism. The last major one was the great Civil Rights March on Washington in 1963 which he led jointly with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Walter Reuther and others. When the AFL and CIO merged in 1955, each of the groups named a Black member to the executive council; Randolph was named from the AFL. He remained on the council until his retirement in 1974. But until recent years, he still faced hostility from Meany. At the 1959 convention when Randolph rose to speak for his union's resolution demanding an end of segregated Black locals in some of the unions, Meany, in the chair, angrily shouted at him, "Who the hell appointed you champion of the Negro members?" (1959 AFL-CIO Convention proceedings.) During that confrontation, as at all past conventions, Randolph's charges embarrassed fellow social democrats who sat in their seats in silence as he was attacked and abused, and they joined with the majority in voting down Randolph's resolution.

The experience at the 1959 convention spurred Randolph's plan to form the Negro American Labor Council (NALC) in May 1960, with the support of Dr. King, a number of Black churches, and some civil rights organizations. Union support came mainly from progressives

on the left. NALC began an active drive against discrimination in some unions. Tension between Randolph and Meany sharpened at the 1961 summer meeting of the AFL-CIO executive council when Randolph presented a comprehensive memorandum on behalf of NALC, documenting the pattern of racism in much of the federation.

At the next meeting of the executive council, he received a reply, made public. It was a long document extremely hostile to Randolph, disputing every charge of NALC and turning the discrimination charge against Randolph on the ground that his union of porters "discriminates against whites." He was charged with fostering a "gap" between whites and Blacks by his charges of discrimination. His political friends on the council, among them Dubinsky, voted for that reply, later printed in pamphlet form and distributed to delegates at the subsequent AFL-CIO convention.

At least until the great march of 1963—which Meany opposed and barred from council endorsement—relations between Meany and Randolph were tense. But in the following year, as Randolph prepared to retire as head of his union, his militancy began to taper off. He left the NALC and almost overnight reversed his attitude towards Meany, Dubinsky and Company. He defended Dubinsky against NAACP discrimination charges before the House committee that held hearings on job discrimination. Since the establishment of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, with an initial AFL-CIO fund of \$100,000 and finances from some affiliates, there hasn't been a word of criticism of unions from Randolph.

While in the past, for many years, Randolph played a positive role in the struggle against racism in the labor movement, he was always, from the beginning, a social democrat and always a red-baiter—fervently anti-Soviet and anti-Communist. His shift of position in the 1960s is therefore not entirely inconsistent.

The Institute was put under the directorship of Bayard Rustin and his assistant Norman Hill (now Executive Director). Both are members of the executive committee of SD-USA, with Rustin as Chairman and Randolph as Chairman Emeritus. At this writing Randolph, 87 and retired from the council, isn't actively involved. But Rustin and Hill are very actively involved in what amounts to cover-up work for AFL-CIO leaders who are targets of discrimination charges, like the building trades and the Shanker-led group in the New York teachers union. Rustin is the most wanted speaker for conventions



of such unions because he can be counted on to give the bureaucracies a clean bill of health on discrimination issues. He serves the same purpose in his column in *AFL-CIO News* and in his articles for the *AFL-CIO Federationist*. Rustin also writes a column in the SD-USA paper, *New America*. To complete the shameful exploitation of Randolph's past for the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the Institute sponsored a biography of Randolph that rated a long review in the *Federationist* by Meany, pouring lavish praise upon the Black man he once charged with "racism."

At this writing, the Institute is most actively involved in denouncing "affirmative action" steps as "discrimination in reverse." In the struggle at the 1975 "mini-convention" of the Democratic Party at which the policy of "affirmative action" to assure representation to minorities, women and youth was debated, Rustin stood alongside of Shanker and other representatives of Meany, in opposition to such measures. The seniority rule of "last hired, first fired" and "first-fired, last rehired" came under attack because its application during the present depression resulted in wholesale liquidation of recent gains for minority workers made through court rulings. No sooner had the AFL-CIO executive council adopted a statement declaring the seniority system untouchable and warning against any diversions from it, than Rustin held a national conference of representatives of the Randolph Institute to give full approval to the AFL-CIO position. The net effect of that policy has been a widespread backslide for minorities, who must now start all over again.

The Institute shows no interest in the fact that the number of Blacks in top union positions is still shamefully insignificant. The unions which together constitute a majority of U.S. union membership still do not have even one Black member on their top executive bodies. In the few unions that do have a Black or Hispanic member at the top level, it is mostly a matter of tokenism and not real representation. There are today an estimated three million Black workers in U.S. unions, about 15 percent of the total. In 1974 the ILGWU, for example, for the first time chose a Black woman for its 25-member board. This did not give representation to the many thousands of Black workers in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and such centers. The ILGWU chose a Black woman from the small San Francisco affiliate. But the leaders are still reluctant to establish voices for the major sections, where the pressure is most dynamic.

The total subservience of the Randolph Institute to the control of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and its money-bags caused the active rank and file among Black union members to launch the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU). The long history of discrimination against women in employment, as well as the almost total absence of women in top union positions, led to the formation of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). Significantly, the unions led by the SDs—the ILGWU, ACW, Textile Workers, and Teachers—ranging from 50 percent to 85 percent women in their membership, have only two women on top boards among the four of them.

### THE JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE

Formed in 1934 by Dubinsky and some of his associates in the Socialist Party they were about to leave, the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) became one of the major arms of right wing social democracy. The right wing SDs were then flocking to the New Deal Democrats, and toward formation of the Social Democratic Federation. The *Forward* in Yiddish and the *New Leader* in English were their principal mouthpieces. Membership in another party became an obstacle to playing a role in the Democratic Party. The right wing SDs therefore formed a "federation." By 1936 Dubinsky, like others of his group, had left the SP and was able to be among the Democratic Party's New York electors in the 1936 presidential campaign.

The tactic then was much like what the right wing SDs did in 1972 when they hurriedly liquidated the merged organization as a party, soon after Michael Harrington's resignation as co-chairman. But while in the thirties they acted on the concept that Roosevelt and the New Deal would provide "socialism" through the Democratic Party, in 1972 they liquidated the party to be able to serve the Meany group and campaign for Henry Jackson for the presidency, and his policy of cold war renewal.

Publicity about the Jewish Labor Committee, such as the article by Thomas Brooks (a right wing SD) in the December, 1973 *AFL-CIO Federationist*, gives the false impression that the group was formed to fight the upsurge of Hitlerism and anti-Semitism. Even if this were true, it would not bestow any special distinction. In the thirties even the rock-ribbed conservatives on the AFL council professed to be concerned with the rising Nazi menace and the



fascist movement that rose in the U.S. The JLC was hardly known to the general public for many years after its formation.

To understand the real purpose of the Dubinsky group in forming the JLC, it is necessary to recall the situation in the country and the labor movement at that time. The country was in the deepest depression in its history. The sweeping movement of the unemployed was becoming very aggressive. The movement of Black and Hispanic peoples was massive. The San Francisco maritime and general strike of 1934 presaged a tremendous labor upsurge. The later, progressive element in the Roosevelt program was not yet evident. The division that was soon to bring the CIO into existence was sharpening in the AFL. In New York a flash strike of some 20,000 dress workers revitalized the ILGWU which had been dormant for a decade. The American League Against War and Fascism, a mass-based anti-fascist movement, was spreading across the country, led by a coalition of left and liberal forces. A trend towards independence from the old parties was also developing, with the rise of the American Labor Party in New York, the Progressive Party in Wisconsin and the victory of the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota.

There was a strong left trend. The Communist Party grew rapidly as it gave major leadership to the unemployed, to organization of the unorganized, the struggles against racism, for real collective bargaining and to smash company unionism; and it was the foremost force against the Nazi-influenced anti-Semitic fascist outfits that were cropping up. The left trend also influenced the ranks of the Socialist Party in some parts of the country, especially where the Socialists participated in united fronts with the Communists, as in joint leadership of the Workers Alliance, the major organization of unemployed, and in certain unions, notably in the early stages of the auto union.

It was in that context that the extreme right within the SP became alarmed and turned its interest towards a "respectable" socialism. Dubinsky had just been elected president of the reviving ILGWU. Other unions of predominantly Jewish membership and leadership in New York also grew or became revitalized. Jewish workers were present in the tens of thousands in New York, employed in women's garment, men's clothing, pocketbook and handbag, fur, millinery, retail, and in a number of building crafts. While New York was the major center of Jewish workers, the same development was evident in other big cities. Many new militant union leaders rose out

of the ranks in the thirties. But many bureaucracies that held control of skeletonized organizations in earlier days exploited this new mass of organized Jewish workers as a power base for a role in the capitalist establishment.

In an interview with Goulden, Meany's biographer, Dubinsky boasted how he and Lovestone had induced Meany in 1933 to take an interest in foreign affairs. Dubinsky told Goulden: "Regardless of what you hear today, Jewish labor leaders weren't universally loved in the AFL inner circle in those days." (Goulden, op. cit., page 118.) Goulden titled that chapter "Birth of a Cold Warrior." The JLC was formed to combat antipathy to Jews inside the top labor bureaucracies at that time—to combine the strength of Jewish union officials to obtain recognition and to break into leadership circles. Dubinsky's inclusion in the AFL's executive council in 1933 was the first time a Jew was named to that body since Gompers, the founder, who was Jewish.

The JLC, however, soon developed another purpose that turned it into a social democratic bridge to the AFL top bureaucracy. It became a united front of established bureaucracies in the unions to combat the strong left-led rank and file movements such as those that existed in the ILGWU, ACW, Fur, and some other unions. The JLC also became a weapon against the SP members who were to the left of the social democrats in some unions of that day. Armed with the *Forward*, which had a sizable circulation among Jewish workers in the thirties, and other Yiddish publications issued by the Jewish Verband, the Workmen's Circle and right wing controlled unions, and a radio station, the JLC became a social democratic propaganda machine among the Jewish workers.

As noted earlier, there was another element in the situation. The use of gangsters, ostensibly to force employers into line for union contracts, soon became a service for the right wing bureaucracy to beat down rank and file opposition. As Benjamin Stolberg wrote in *Tailor's Progress*, "by the mid-thirties the gangster was one of the dominant factors in the garment industry," with the notorious Lepke and Gurrah gangs "at their height" of power. Stolberg was an ardent defender of Dubinsky's group. He reported that Dubinsky admitted in an interview with him that the ILGWU, after using the gangsters, was unable to get rid of the "misfortune." It is not a coincidence that prominent right-wing "socialists" figured in the most noted cases where gangsters were used. These "socialists" were also among the



founding members of the Jewish Labor Committee.

The developments 40 years ago may not seem to some as relevant to conditions today. But they are—very much so. The labor upsurge in the thirties was also historic because it marked the greatest mass movement of Black people until that time, first through organizations of unemployed, then in the tremendous flow into the unions.

The rising CIO opened the gates wide for Black workers. In the AFL Black workers were still excluded in many unions, or were looked upon as unwelcome newcomers. In the unions where ethnic domination was already hardened—whether Jewish, Italian, or Irish, to mention the most numerous—the Black workers found themselves virtually excluded from the life of the union, except for the dues checkoff. In the right wing social democratic dominated unions the Black workers faced the “ordinary” racist prejudice and were beyond the pale on ethnic grounds. After two generations, that is still the situation, as recently-elected ILGWU president Sol Chaikin conceded.

In recent years the JLC has been advertising itself as a civil rights organization. But it does things in a “respectable” way. Its activity seems to be mostly the sponsoring of testimonials to prominent personalities for alleged “championship” of civil rights, invitations to Black speakers to its conferences, and on occasion, financial contribution to a civil rights cause. An example of its function was a JLC dinner “honoring” I.W. Abel, president of the United Steel Workers of America, as a champion of civil rights. This, by coincidence, came soon after the 1973 election in the union during which Abel was under attack for racism because a Black man, Sam Stokes, on the union's staff since its inception, was ruled off the ballot for vice-president on a trumped up trivial technicality, although 470 locals endorsed his nomination—four times the number required. The USWA did not have a Black person as regional director or on its executive board since its inception. On top of that, Abel had just negotiated a contract leaving untouched the two-track seniority line—one for the least desirable jobs where Blacks were mostly concentrated, another for the whites (as detailed earlier).

The dinner was obviously arranged to give Abel a cover-up—a plaque he could display in his office as testimony of his “admirable” civil rights record. Soon afterward came the Abel administration's smashing defeat with the election of Edward Sadlowski as district director in District 31, the largest district. Abel's image was in serious

need of “repair.” So in March, 1975, Social Democrats-USA arranged a dinner for him at which he was presented with an award, jointly by SD-USA Chairman Bayard Rustin and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland, for “unbending commitment to democracy.” The affair was given wide publicity and featured in *AFL-CIO News*.

In that same month, the JLC had a dinner and award for Lane Kirkland. Some weeks later, the SD-controlled League for Industrial Democracy had a dinner for JLC head Jacob Sheinkman, Secretary-Treasurer of the ACW, and Sol Chaikin, then still Secretary-Treasurer of the ILGWU.

The JLC's civil rights “concern” is most apparent in its frequent dinner speeches in praise of labor bureaucrats distinguished for racist policies. It provides cover-up services for them. The major current activity of the JLC, however, by no means limited to dinners, is the saturation of unions with its anti-Soviet propaganda: support for so-called “dissidents” of the Solzhenitsyn type, and false allegations of anti-Semitism in the USSR and restraints on Jewish emigration.

At the top of the JLC's agenda is active support to the position of the most aggressive saber-rattlers in Israel, in line with the current program of Social Democrats-USA.

The JLC's activity in cooperation with the CIA runs back to the intelligence agency's earliest days. Goulden notes in his biography of Meany that in the post-war years Lovestone and Irving Brown organized, with CIA money, a split-off from the French labor federation, a right wing outfit named Force Ouvriere (FO). Brown directed the splitting operations in Paris. Goulden writes, “One group Brown used as a front was the Jewish Labor Committee in New York, which acted as a conduit to get AFL money to the FO, ostensibly for Jewish relief, actually for organization. By late 1947 the AFL was committed to sending FO three thousand dollars every three weeks. The ILGWU also made contributions.” (Goulden, op. cit., p. 128.)

The JLC's main ground for claiming that it is a civil rights organization is the boast that it is combatting anti-Semitism. There certainly is much anti-Semitism in the United States to combat. It is doubtful if there is another country that has as many organizations, and as many publications going freely through the mails, and as many radio programs, all spewing out anti-Semitic filth daily to millions of people, as the United States. And where else is the bomb-



ing of Jewish houses of worship or anti-Semitic defacing of their walls, or desecration of Jewish cemeteries, as frequent as in the USA? Discrimination against Jews in employment, housing, etc. is still widespread. One need only refer to the bulletins, surveys and publications of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to get an idea of the shameful picture. In fact, the situation is accepted as routine.

But the JLC and the other SD-USA fronts do not deal with these questions. They only scream about deliberately concocted stories of anti-Semitism in the USSR—where *by law, which is enforced*, anti-Semitism is punishable as a crime. They seize upon an occasional trivial incident of anti-Semitism and blow it up out of all proportion for anti-Soviet propaganda purposes. In pre-Revolutionary Russia anti-Semitism was official policy, pogroms were frequent and Jews were harshly oppressed at every turn. That on occasion an incident reflecting a survival of that heritage crops up should hardly be surprising. The fact is, however, that in the USSR no one would dare carry on the kind of anti-Semitic propaganda activity, printed or spoken, which goes on daily here—it would be impossible to get away with it. The further fact is that among the three million Jews in the USSR the percentage with higher education, and in the professions and sciences, is higher than for any other sector of the Soviet population. In the USSR, Jews occupy many positions of authority and responsibility in industry, government and the armed forces.

The JLC and the SDs, by raving about anti-Semitism where it isn't, are in effect covering up anti-Semitism where it is—in the USA.

The activity of the JLC and its SD backers is most of all harmful to the Jewish workers. The fanning and exploitation of nationalist sentiments serves to divert attention from the real struggles at home. It also aims to stamp out the traditions of progressivism and militancy among the Jewish workers which were a tremendous positive influence in the U.S. labor movement during the dramatic struggles of the first three decades of this century. SD-USA aims to drown these traditions in a swamp of class-collaborationist nationalism. It is a tail to the kite of U.S. imperialism. It seeks to siphon off the class consciousness of Jewish workers and to augment the political influence of capitalists over the Jewish population. It seeks to intimidate and crush all anti-Zionist and anti-nationalist opposition among the Jewish people in the United States.

## ISRAELI "SOCIALISM"

The leadership of Social Democrats-USA professes to be socialists of some sort. They hang on to some trappings to give themselves a "socialist" look—like the occasional Debs Award dinners which they give as a way to shower encomiums upon favored personalities. But they have little in common with Eugene Victor Debs. While SD-USA's main preoccupation is spewing hatred and venom against the Soviet Union and the other lands where socialism is a reality, they make much of the "socialist" leadership of Israel. This reflects their concept of socialism. The so-called labor coalition ruling Israel also professes to be "socialist." The heads of the Israeli government attend the periodic meetings of the Socialist International. But the reality is that they have done nothing toward bringing socialism to Israel. Instead they have developed Israel as a capitalist country, thoroughly tied to imperialism and saturated with Zionist racism.

The organizations under SD-USA control are the loudest in denouncing the United Nations resolution calling for Israeli withdrawal from all occupied lands as a necessary condition for peace in the Middle East. There is no distinction between the positions of the Zionists and the SDs. It is therefore of interest to take a look at some accomplishments of the Israeli "socialists," although the key Mid-East issue is not socialism but a durable peace, and for Israel to be secure and live in peace with its neighbors.

On occasion even newspapers supporting the Israeli government disclose conditions in Israel hardly akin to socialism. Terence Smith, *New York Times* correspondent in Israel, reported in his dispatch of September 4, 1973:

Here in Savoyn dozens of new homes in the \$100,000 and up class are rising on every available plot. The art galleries, marinas, boutiques and lavish homes are signs of the new Israeli affluence that is one of the most striking by-products of the six-day war in 1967. Riding the crest of a spiraling post-war boom, more and more Israelis are adopting the life-style that would have astounded Zionists of a generation back.

Scores of personal fortunes have been made since the war, many by independent contractors whom the government hired on a cost-plus basis to build fortifications and settlements in the



occupied Arab territories. Others have grown rich because of the sudden expansion of post-war markets, others from Sinai Peninsula oil fields and still others from the growing stream of foreign capital that has flowed into Israel.

Smith noted that a newspaper said there are 200 millionaires in Israel, but the head of an accounting firm serving big business told him "two thousand is more like it," although only 200 may admit it. Amnon Rubinstein, dean of Tel Aviv University law school, told Smith: "a whole new sub-culture of the rich has grown up in Israel."

Smith reported that most striking in Savoy and in the even wealthier Herzlia Petuach, also a Tel Aviv suburb, are the many swimming pools and heated indoor pools and yachts.

Now let us turn to the *San Francisco Chronicle* of March 18, 1971, to a dispatch of Nechemia Meyers:

Poverty is bad enough, but poverty limited almost exclusively to Jews from North Africa and the Middle East is potential social dynamite. The Panthers, all of whom come from the so-called "Oriental" families, may not know the statistics—that "Oriental" youngsters make up 42 percent of Israeli school children, but only ten percent of the high-school graduates; that 33 percent of the boys and girls under supervision of probation officers come from large families, which almost always means "Oriental" families. But the Panthers do know how they live and how Jews of European origin live.

According to official statistics, a quarter million Israelis live at or below the poverty line. Many of them are large families crowded five and six to a room, sharing a bed or no bed at all.

Meyers' reference to the "Panthers" is to the movement begun by the darker-skinned youths of Sephardic families, in the form of protests and other activities. The name was inspired by the publicity the U.S. Black Panthers were getting.

In a January 2, 1973, dispatch, Terence Smith reported, on the basis of interviews with Israeli authorities, on the tremendous rise of violent crime, up 35 percent, in the five years after the 1967 war, with burglaries up 200 percent. Israeli police, he reported, estimate

5,000 narcotic addicts in a population lower than Chicago's. Prostitution, widespread in major cities, is put at 4,000 "working" prostitutes between the ages of 14 and 17, 1,000 of them in Tel Aviv.

The report goes on to cite Israeli figures on the steep rise of murders, rapes and the beginnings of organized crime, including the U.S. style "protection" rackets of shops, bars, restaurants and night clubs. Meir Shamgar, the Israeli attorney general, told Smith that the crime trend is influenced by "the increased exposure of Israelis to the outside world" and the "steady stretch of American crime shows in their living rooms."

The above, of course, is not exceptional. It is in accord with the pattern in all capitalist lands, and carries the closest resemblance to conditions in the U.S. It is a picture of capitalism, including racism. The majority of the Israelis are Sephardic Jews from African, Asian and Mediterranean lands. The majority of the country's rulers are Ashkenazis, of European origin.

In the short time since the above reports, conditions in Israel have deteriorated drastically. The cost of living increase after the drastic currency devaluation of 1975, among the steepest in the world, has hit the working class the hardest.

*Los Angeles Times* correspondent Harry Trimborn, reporting from Israel in a January 14, 1973 dispatch, observed that on a still lower rung are the Arab laborers. He wrote: "There are tens of thousands of Arab laborers to do the heavy physical work for the Israelis. The contrast can be seen on any construction site as lean and muscular Arab workmen help build the Jewish state under the direction of a paunchy Israeli foreman or engineer."

In an interview with Trimborn, Histadrut Secretary-General Itzhak Ben Aharon observed that occupation has put many Arabs under Israeli authority, so that now 55,000 Arabs have become the core of the country's physical labor force and "we are building Zionism on the backs of Arab laborers while the Israelis have become softened by a leisure life style."

In the face of such facts, the recent UN resolution branding Zionism as a form of racism is fully valid.

Those new arrivals to Israel who emigrated from the Soviet Union, lured by glowing promises, were both disappointed and shocked by what they came into. Many of the professionals and highly skilled workers were forced to take common labor jobs at very low pay,



poor living quarters, no job security, with medical care and higher education very costly. Most shocking was the display to them of all the social diseases of capitalism, compressed into the small country.

Since the above reports, and the brief period of heavy inflow of Jews from the Soviet Union, a sharp reverse has developed. Letters to friends and relatives describing the disappointing conditions have sharply cut the number migrating to Israel. Most of the current emigration from the Soviet Union, very much reduced, steers to other countries. There is also a steady departure of those who did come to Israel. Many have been addressing appeals to the Soviet Union for readmission.

Israel could have been on a path towards peace and progress had it been independent of ties to imperialist powers. The Soviet Union, the first country to recognize Israel, warned at the start that her future could be bright only through a policy of independence and friendship with the surrounding Arab lands. The Communists of the United States frequently warned that if Israel listens to its false Social Democratic friends in the U.S., and turns its territory into a Middle East base for imperialism, its hopes for progress and security would be shattered.

Unfortunately, those who seized the reins of power in Israel were deaf to the warnings. Conventions of the ILGWU adopted resolutions that strongly urged Israel to take an anti-Soviet position. Otherwise, the continued union support and the fund collections in the United States would not be forthcoming. Israel was urged to stake its future on the armaments and protection of the United States—and on military budgets that have kept the country in perpetual bankruptcy and dependence on military credits.

Typical of the position of the U.S. Communists was this writer's column commenting on the ILGWU's resolution at the union's 1956 convention: "The idea that a tiny country can secure its own future by lending itself as a tool for enslavement of other peoples, is sheer madness. Unfortunately, American labor's influence has not been as constructive as its financial aid to Israel. We have on several occasions observed that the union most active in support of Israel and Histadrut is the ILGWU. The foreign policy resolutions of the ILGWU, always influential in Israel, have stressed that Israel's future and security can only be assured if that country associates itself with the Western powers against the Soviet Union in the Middle East.

The view that Israel can be more secure as a doormat for imperialist powers is the worst possible for that country. . . . What prospect is there for Israel to live as a perpetual stockade with all its resources going for military purposes?" (*Daily Worker*, November 2, 1956.)

How true that proved to be in the nearly 20 years that have passed! Israel is now more deeply than ever in the imperialist trap and its SD-USA "friends" want to keep it there.

The position of these madmen, part of a general course, has isolated the AFL-CIO from the labor movement of the world and SD-USA from most socialist parties of the world, just as their support of the Vietnam war isolated and discredited them. *New America* ran an appeal pleading with the Socialist International and its affiliates not to be "neutral" but to back Israel's defiance of the UN position on the Middle East. Despite the special visit of Golda Meir, then prime minister, to a Socialist International meeting to seek such backing, she did not receive a positive response.

The *AFL-CIO News* of February 9, 1974, reporting on a visit to Israel of a delegation named by Meany, said that a joint statement of the delegates and Histadrut termed the attitude of Europe's unions on the Middle East "disappointing." The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, to which the social democratic unions of Europe belong, reported in the December, 1973 issue of its publication, *Free World Labor*, that its executive board's meeting unanimously voted a "neutral" position on the Mid-East.

Another aspect of the policy of the AFL-CIO, also mainly instigated by its SD-USA ideologues, is Meany's current campaign for U.S. withdrawal from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) because the UN is "dominated" by developing and socialist nations. This racism was dramatized at the June, 1975 ILO conference from which the AFL-CIO delegation, led by Irving Brown, an SDer and veteran CIA operative, walked out when observer status was voted by an overwhelming majority for the Palestine Liberation Organization. But only the Israeli delegation walked out with Brown. It was even suggested in the *AFL-CIO News* of October 12, 1974, in the weekly editorial column of right wing social democrat John P. Roche, that the UN be expelled from the United States, because of pressure in it for exclusion of South Africa and Israel. This brought the Meany-SD group in line



with the ultra-rightist, anti-labor John Birch Society, which has long campaigned for U.S. withdrawal from the UN.

### **U.S. BRAND OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY**

Historically, reform socialists have cooperated with capitalism and opposed revolution, on the basis of their theory that capitalism can in time be reformed out of existence. A century of such effort, including right wing SD aid to the bourgeoisie to suppress revolutionary movements, as in Germany after World War I, has only further entrenched capitalism where it still exists. Where the working class and its allies took a Marxist revolutionary course, capitalism has been wiped out. This has happened in a substantial part of the world, and has led to a rapid development of socialism and the building of the kind of life people have aspired to since Marx and Engels wrote the famed Communist Manifesto in 1848. There is a steady trend to the Marxist-Leninist banner by oppressed peoples, especially in the developing lands. As the image of capitalism gets ever uglier with its deep worldwide depression, ever-greater military expenditures, more and more millions in poverty, growing crime, narcotic addiction and other elements of decadence, the social democrats are needed more than ever, with their "socialist" pose, to help give capitalism a "popular" look. Seeking to enhance their market value to capitalism, some of the far right elements in social democracy escalate the viciousness of their anti-Soviet propaganda.

Simultaneously, as noted in the introduction, there is an opposite trend among the parties associated with the Socialist International. There are a number of socialist parties, like those of Chile, France, Japan and in some developing lands, that reject the policy of betrayal. Some tend towards Marxist principles and enter into united fronts with Communists for common objectives and struggle. In many right-led socialist parties or social democratic parties, as in West Germany, there is developing an internal cleavage between the right wing leaders and their mostly young opponents who in various ways, however hesitantly, incline to the left.

As already noted, there is such division in socialist ranks even in the United States. In October, 1972, only six months after a supposed reunification following about 35 years of division, a new split occurred. Moreover, there is now a third splinter, calling

itself Socialist Party-USA, that was founded at a conference in Milwaukee. While SD-USA, in line with the Meany group it serves, is mainly oriented towards the "regulars" in the Democratic Party, Harrington's "Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee" (DSOC) is also working within the Democratic Party, but is closer to the so-called liberal "New Politics" forces. There seems to be no DSOC inclination, therefore, to reconstitute the SP as an independent party. The Harrington group also emphasizes its anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism. While critical of SD-USA for its orientation to Meany, Harrington's group has not rejected Meany's anti-detente campaign and supports the so-called "dissidents" in the USSR. Also, Harrington voices praise for Meany for "enormous and enduring contributions." Harrington's group shows little distinction from SD-USA. Nevertheless, while a small number of people are directly involved in the dispute, the division reflects a much larger segment in the unions. Harrington's DSOC claims the endorsement of Victor Reuther, for many years head of the auto union's international affairs; David Selden, until 1974 President of the American Federation of Teachers, who led one of that union's caucuses against Shanker; Ralph Helstein, former Vice-President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters, and others in that union's leadership; some UAW staff people who were associated with the late Walter Reuther; Emil Mazey, Secretary-treasurer of the UAW; and a number of top and regional leaders of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees including Jerry Wurf and William Lucy, respectively President and Secretary-Treasurer of that large union.

Most of these trade union people were associated with Labor for Peace, which had an active role in labor's opposition to the Vietnam war. They advocated a "moderation" of anti-Sovietism. Some among them even favored relations with the unions of socialist lands and, at least formally, supported the policy of detente, although not actively. They show a relatively more advanced position for inclusion of Blacks, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans in union leadership and against racism. Within the Democratic Party they are also closer to those who support affirmative action to bring more minority, women and youth representation into the party, a policy the Meany forces tried but failed to defeat at the 1974 "mini-convention." The Harrington group could have developed a base for itself if it had turned its attention to the rank and file workers, and recognized the



realities in the United States and the rest of the world. But since the 1972 split the Harrington group seems to have put more effort into narrowing its differences with the far right than on left unity in struggle.

Unlike many other socialist parties or groups in many lands, Harrington ignores the fact that the basic trend in the world today is away from the cold war. That trend, most clearly shown among organized workers, has compelled even many European labor leaders of the right to differentiate their organizations from the Meany-SD-USA group. Meany periodically charges that such changes are "towards Communism." That, of course, is a falsehood. But the changes do reflect the pressure of the tens of millions of workers in social democratic led unions who see the urgency of unity against the exploiters, especially the multinationals, rather than for Meany's "war on Communism." The European Trade Union Confederation now includes unions of the three internationals. In Italy the Catholic, Communist and Socialist led unions are cooperating. In Britain some of the outstanding leaders of affiliates of the Trades Union Congress are Communists. Social democrats, leaders of West German, British, Belgian and other national union centers, visit the USSR as guests of the Soviet unions, and usually issue joint statements for fraternal relations and detente. It should be obvious to U.S. socialists who really differentiate themselves from the reactionary Meany-SD-USA forces that their position can have substance only if they strive for united action of the forces on the left on issues affecting the working class.

SD-USA is the most far-right group of any in the Socialist International—akin to the Israeli Labor Party and the treacherous Socialist Party of Portugal led by Mario Soares. It is neither a party, nor independent in any sense. By its own analyses and theory it is openly in the service of the Meany group in the unions and in the Democratic Party. The theoretical position for the course followed by SD-USA is credited to one of the founding leaders of Trotskyism in the United States, the late Max Shachtman. This may seem paradoxical in view of the usual cry of the Trotskyists that the Communists aren't far enough to the "left." That, however, is explained in an article by Irwin Suall, an SD-USA leader and former secretary of the Socialist Party, in *New America* of May 25, 1972.

The Suall article, appearing soon after the ill-fated "unification,"

reviewed the history of 35 years of division and the happy reunification. "The decisive role in this development was played by the former ISLers under the guiding influence of Max Shachtman," wrote Suall. His reference was to the splitoff from the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), led by Shachtman, that existed for some years under the name Independent Socialist League, prior to joining the SP. In the SP, Shachtman's group, associated with Norman Thomas, became influential in intra-party matters internally.

Suall wrote that "Shachtman rejected the entire notion" that the SP has to be "operating as an independent force in opposition to the Democratic Party." This was a "revolution" in concept, he wrote. Shachtman, in line with that position, set the objective to "reconstruct the ties of American socialism with the trade union movement primarily through active support of labor's political action program." It was when the SP accepted Shachtman's thesis that the conditions were ready "for a convergence of the basic political ideas of both groups," hence the merger, wrote Suall. That merger, however, didn't even last six months.

How did Shachtman theorize for his "revolution" in the SP? This was explained by James Ray Adams in a *New America* article, October 15, 1973. When still in the SWP, Shachtman took the position that the Soviet Union was "ruled by reaction" and is not a socialist country. He concluded that the only hope for "socialism" is in the "democratic" capitalist lands. In the United States it is the Democratic Party that should be the "arena for socialist politics." Hence the requirement for socialists to work "with the labor movement," meaning its bureaucracy, which is today Meany and Company.

Shachtman's thesis was based first on anti-Sovietism; second on complete hopelessness for the socialist objective—that is, for what he conceived as "socialism"; third on complete surrender to capitalism and service to its most reactionary elements. Shachtman's "thesis" is, in fact, the premise on which the ultra-lefts and ultra-rights wind up in the same bed. His co-leader in the faction within the Socialist Workers Party that supported his thesis was James Burnham. They held the position during World War II that the USSR was as bad as Nazi Germany and that a victory for the USSR in that war was not preferable. Eventually, Burnham became chief editorial writer for William Buckley's ultra-rightist *National Review*, and Shachtman carried that position into the SP.



Summarizing, the prime motivation for the SD-USA course is opposition to the socialist world as the starting point. No matter what the issue, SD-USA's stand on it must be conditioned on how it affects the Soviet Union and the other countries under Communist leadership. Following the "guilt by association" rule, the same hostility must extend to a country friendly to the USSR. That policy of madness is followed no matter how dangerous and unpopular it may be (as in the case of the Vietnam War or on detente) because it is through service to Meany's group in the labor movement that the Democratic Party becomes the "arena for socialist politics." On the basis of that service, SD-USA actively backed Meany's policy of non-endorsement for President in 1972—a policy which in effect was helpful to Nixon; supported the Vietnam War to the very last minute; opposed affirmative action at the Democratic Party's mini-convention; and supplied personnel for the CIA's "labor" cover, e.g., Irving Brown, Jay Lovestone and others.

The same anti-Sovietism that underlies SD-USA's service to imperialism, primarily through the AFL-CIO top bureaucracy, provides the basis for the assortment of ultra-lefts that have been receiving very favorable publicity, and special treatment by the FBI, CIA and reactionary forces in general. Their so-called "theories" and differences, whether Trotskyist, Maoist, or anarchist, are meaningless because their day-to-day activities and cries are like echoes of SD-USA's anti-Soviet fulminations. To the CIA the results are the same whether the help comes from the right or phoney lefts.

It is a historic fact that the course of the right SDs was developed by renegades cleaned out of Communist ranks during a cleansing process in the late 1920s. In 1928 the Trotskyist "lefts" were kicked out. In 1929, the Lovestone-led "right" was expelled. It is from this refuse that reactionaries of all stripes recruited their "theoreticians," informers, disrupters and splitters of the working class movement.

### LOOKING AHEAD

The main reason the top AFL-CIO bureaucracy has developed its close relations with SD-USA is a hopeful belief within Meany's group that SD-USA's service can restore to the union conservatives

a more "liberal" look and the friendship and alliance of liberals, intellectuals and professionals. The Meany group looks back to the cold war days when the right wing socialists helped to round up some "cold war liberalism."

In recent years, the AFL-CIO leadership alienated liberal-intellectual support by its position on Vietnam. Among the youth, especially on the campuses, there is much hostility towards the group around Meany. The rising movement among women in the trade unions, voiced mainly through the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), is also, despite right wing SD attempts to influence CLUW's policies, influencing opposition to the all-male reactionary control of the Meany group. There is also a sharper antagonism to the top bureaucracy in the ranks of Black and Hispanic trade unionists, with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists its most articulate expression.

Significantly, the SDers on the AFL-CIO payroll are in the "ideological" or "political" spots. Tom Kahn, member of SD-USA's national committee, is assistant to Meany and is his speech-writer; another national committee member, Penn Kemble, heads the "Coalition for a Democratic Majority" through which AFL-CIO influence is assured to the Democratic Party's "moderates"; still another heads Frontlash, a device for attracting youth through political registration. John Roche, columnist of *New America*, writes the *AFL-CIO News* weekly political comment on its editorial page. Lovestone, while technically retired, is still Meany's consultant on international affairs; Irving Brown is AFL-CIO representative in the ILO; Bayard Rustin, chairman of SD-USA, writes a column in *AFL-CIO News* and actively tours conventions and conferences as an apologist for the bureaucracy on problems affecting Black workers; Tom Brooks, who writes a column in *New America*, is now recognized by the Meany bureaucracy as a "labor historian," because he "adjusts" history to please the bureaucracy. The real head of the Industrial Union Department is not I.W. Abel, its President, but Jacob Clayman, the social democrat, who is Secretary-Treasurer. Albert Shanker, who now emerges as the chief spokesman for the SDs on the AFL-CIO executive council, is drawn in for international trips and other such "sensitive" duties. Meany's son-in-law, Ernest Lee, replaced Lovestone as head of the International Affairs department, but he is propped up by Tom Kahn, who is also editor of the *AFL-CIO's*



*Free Trade Union News*, a publication for global operators, now to be published in five languages. Norman Hill, another member of the SD-USA executive, is Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, financed by the AFL-CIO, with Rustin as President.

The above, only a small part of the list of mostly newer additions to the Meany group's payroll, gives just an indication of the extent of SD-USA's services to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. The pattern is obvious. The SDs are hired to supply "ideology" in a more "presentable" form for the septuagenarians and octogenarians running the AFL-CIO's executive council. Meany needs them especially to give him a "better look" in the face of the fact that he is in conflict with the social democrats abroad and isolated from world labor.

At a dinner for Meany in New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel on November 9, 1967, one of those arranged by the Jewish Labor Committee, Meany denounced "our West European friends, who call themselves democratic socialists," because "they have now adopted a policy of what they call rapprochement with the so-called unions of the Soviet bloc. . . . Now these people consider themselves social democrats and trade unionists—but they've gone to Moscow to celebrate the 50th Anniversary" of the USSR. He further bemoaned "a definite policy to change the policy of the ICFTU." (*Justice*, November 15, 1967.)

On one occasion in 1973 when British labor leaders came to the United States to confer with AFL-CIO leaders on problems related to multinational corporations, he went into tantrums against them, charging that the formation of the European regional labor body (ETUC) was a step towards "Communism."

The December 1973 issue of the AFL-CIO *Federationist* carried an exchange of letters between Meany and Heinz O. Vetter, president of West Germany's labor federation, a social democrat. Vetter defended his organization's friendly relations with the Soviet trade unions, stressing the changes that are taking place in the world and the policy of detente. Meany replied, "I am afraid that the estrangement between the AFL-CIO and the DGB mentioned by you is not likely to be overcome very easily, not very soon."

Another example of the mood for a change is the report in the bulletin of the International Metal Workers Federation of February, 1974, that the executive board had adopted a statement declaring

that the "general situation has changed" with respect to a former ban by the IMF on relations with the unions of socialist countries and the WFTU. The board directed the drafting of a "new version" taking into account the new developments. The IMF is led mainly by social democrats, but the major U.S. metal unions are affiliated with it.

So the trend runs across every continent. But the Meany group, with the help of the SDs, sticks to its CIA "international", the organizations in Latin America, Asia and Africa that have been set up with AFL-CIO operatives to cover for the CIA.

Meany withdrew the AFL-CIO from the ICFTU because, he charged, the ICFTU no longer carries out its 1949 "founding objective" (when the cold war was raging) and doesn't "fight communism." But the world's labor movement has long ago shifted to the problems it really faces. As in the United States, a world economic crisis runs across all capitalist lands, with an inflation of unprecedented scope. Workers everywhere, even if employed, are forced to struggle much harder to race with the economic treadmill. The multinational corporations are now the major monopoly power menacing trade union conditions as never before in modern times. Now even the workers in higher wage brackets are seriously threatened. War and the threat of war are ever present. Racial oppression is rampant in many parts of the world. A Harris Poll in 1974 found that 53 percent of Americans said "there is something deeply wrong in America." This in the "affluent" United States!

The test in the days ahead is whether the labor movements of the world will be able to rally the united strength and leadership for a basic change—whether the three trade union internationals can rally the hundreds of millions of organized workers. As Jack Jones, prominent British labor leader, told the 1973 British Trades Union Congress: "Civilization itself is threatened and the workers of the world are possibly the only force which can save it from destruction."

In the face of the urgent need for world labor unity, in the United States, the main seat of imperialism and the threat of war, with the sharpest domestic crisis, the men at the controls in labor, jointly with the SDs in their service, are busily conspiring to prevent world labor unity and to create roadblocks to the progress of detente. They still shout that the main task of the world labor



movement is to fight "Communism." They brought Alexander Solzhenitsyn to the United States in an effort to prevent President Ford from signing the Helsinki peace agreement. They staged the Washington dinner at which Solzhenitsyn, after praising the overthrown Czarism of old Russia, called for a reappraisal of Hitler. "At the first threat of Hitlerism you stretched out your hand to Stalin. You call that sustaining democracy?" shouted Solzhenitsyn. (AFL-CIO News, July 5, 1975.)

In the midst of nearly 10 million unemployed and a renewed threat of two-digit inflation, these conspirators give priority to an advertising campaign across the country, at the cost of many tens of thousands of dollars, in support of those forces in Portugal who are trying, in the name of "socialism," to undermine democratic and socialist advance. These full-page ads, in newspapers from New York to Los Angeles in the name of Social Democrats-USA, had in addition to the usual SD signatures, those of several members of the AFL-CIO executive council, including Lane Kirkland, the federation's Secretary-Treasurer.

The U.S. labor movement is in a crisis because the men who control it refuse to face the real world and the problems the workers of the United States face today. It has been many years since confidence in the top leadership of the AFL-CIO has been as low as it is today. The executive council of 35 has an average age level of over 65. The council has never had a woman member. Black representation is token, although Blacks number three million in the unions. The late Walter Reuther characterized the council as "guardians of the status quo." And the SDs encourage that role because their perspective is based on serving and pleasing Meany and those around him.

The test of people who are on the left, be they Communists or others, including presumably those in the old SP who differentiate themselves from the right wing, is a readiness to unite for struggle on the basis of the problems that concern the working class and for revitalization of the labor movement. And a most essential element for such unity is a recognition of the menacing role of Social Democrats-USA.

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